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THE
WORKS
Of the Right Reverend
THOMAS NEWTON, D.D.
Late LORD BISHOP of BRISTOL,
And DEAN of ST. PAUL's, LONDON:
WITH SOME
ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE,
AND
ANECDOTES of several of his FRIENDS.
WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.
IN SIX VOLUMES.

Which, with the Three Volumes of DISSERTATIONS
ON THE PROPHECIES, contain all his Lordship's
Works,

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N^o 62, IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

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DISSERTATION XVI.

Religion our greatest pleasure.

GOOD, pleasure, happiness, or whatever else you please to call it, is the constant wish and constant aim of mankind in all their designs and actions. And it is not only reasonable, that we should pursue our pleasure and happiness; it is the primary law and instinct of our nature. We were born for that very end, for God made his creatures, all to be happy, none to be miserable; and we have affections and appetites continually craving and longing after it, importunate suiters that will be heard, that will be gratified. We tend to it as naturally as bodies gravitate to their centre, and if it was not for this attraction, we should live in perpetual suspense and inactivity; our wills would never be determined, and we should never be moved to action, if we did not propose to ourselves some good, either real or apparent, in truth or in imagination.

But as all men pursue happiness, do all men know how it is to be attained, or wherein it consists? What Job said of wisdom, we may as

Religion our greatest pleasure.

truly say of pleasure. (Job XXVIII. 12, &c.)
“Where shall” pleasure “be found, and where
“is the place of” happiness? “It cannot be
“gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weigh-
“ed for the price thereof. No mention shall
“be made of coral or of pearls, for the price of”
happiness “is above rubies. Whence then
cometh” pleasure, “and where is the place of”
happiness? Shall we consult mankind about
it? we shall find their opinions as many and as
various almost as men themselves. Every one
hath his pleasure, and almost every one’s plea-
sure is different from that of any other. Shall
we then apply to the philosophers? they are no
more agreed about their summum bonum or
chief good than the illiterate and ignorant vul-
gar. I think St. Austin somewhere out of
Varro reckons up no less than 280 different
opinions concerning it: And in such a case as
this we cannot long continue sceptics; we must
pursue happiness in one shape, in one form or
other; only let us take care lest by catching at
the shadow we lose the substance.

It is a thing that of all others most nearly
concerns us, and therefore it may be worth
our while to attend to what Solomon saith upon
the subject; for his opinion is not like that of
an old doting philosopher, who condemns plea-
sure for none other reason perhaps but because
he never enjoyed it. He was possessed of riches
and power, to furnish him with pleasures in
variety and abundance; and he was blessed
with



with superior parts and wisdom, to know how to taste and relish them, and how to form a proper judgment of them. And what was the result of so much experience and knowledge? Why that religion was our greatest pleasure, the rest was "vanity of vanities, all was vanity." "Her ways," emphatically and preferably to all others, (Prov. III, 17.) "her ways are ways of pleasantness," and "all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her."

If this be really the case, one of the strongest prejudices against religion will be removed, and one of the greatest points will be gained in its favor. For nothing discourageth men so much from religion, as the notion of its being a dull melancholy mortifying thing; whereas if the contrary can be made appear, that religion is really our greatest pleasure, I suppose, we shall entertain more favorable thoughts of it, and endeavor to be religious as we desire to be happy. Now that religion actually is our greatest pleasure, that this seeming paradox is a most certain truth, will appear whether we consider in the first place the little satisfaction that is to be found in all other pleasures, or 2dly the peculiar properties and advantages of religious pleasures above all others. By the former of which it will appear, that religion is free from those inconveniences with which other pleasures abound;

4 *Religion our greatest pleasure.*

and by the latter, that it abounds with advantages, which other pleasures want.

I. It will appear that religion is our greatest pleasure, if we consider in the first place the little satisfaction that is to be found in all other pleasures. The pleasures of religion are as I may say the true sterling; the rest are no better than dross in comparison. But to declaim against the pleasures of the world is entering into a wide field, and it is much more difficult to know what to choose than what to refuse in so copious a subject. All good or pleasure therefore may not improperly be reduced to *power*, which may comprehend all the goods of fortune; or what is usually called *pleasure*, which includes all the gratifications of the senses; or *knowledge*, which is the food and delight of the understanding.

1. *Power* may be the means indeed of our doing a great deal of good in the world; but otherwise what can it supply us with to constitute our happiness? Can riches purchase contentment? Or are the most wealthy always the most easy and happy? Riches are but a sort of necessary evils; the trouble of getting, the difficulty of keeping, the hope of increasing, the fear of losing, are not these enough to balance the pleasure of enjoying? Think how and by whom usually they are got, and how and by whom usually they are spent; and you will have no great reason to envy the one or the other.

Have

Have pomp and grandeur any fairer pretensions to happiness? To live always in state is to live always in constraint. To all ingenuous minds it is a burden rather than a pleasure; and how are they pleased every now and then to retire, to lay aside their formalities, and enjoy themselves in private like other men? Such changes are often agreeable to the great, and indeed without this variety they could hardly support their greatness.

What then think you of dress and equipage? Alas! all that looketh gay and splendid is not happy, no more than all that glisters is gold. The finest cloaths often cover an aking heart; and they must have a very low sense of happiness indeed, who can wear it upon their backs. All your finery cannot equal the colors and beauty of the rainbow, it is a much finer sight, will attract more eyes, and not much sooner passeth away and is gone. And what pleasure is it to be incumbered with a numerous train of attendants? He who increaseth his servants, increaseth his plagues. At best they are no better than so many spies set upon a man to watch and report his behaviour.

What then think you of building and gardening? Will the pleasure answer the expense? To what straits and difficulties do they often reduce a family? What incumbrances do they often bring upon an estate? and perhaps prove the occasion of seiling it, and selling it to greater disadvantage at last. But if there be

none of these inconveniences, yet it is excellently said by an ingenious author, (Mr. Pope)
 “ I seldom see a noble building or any great
 “ piece of magnificence and pomp, but I think
 “ how little is all this to satisfy the ambition,
 “ or to fill the idea of an immortal soul ?”

And for power itself, what a lubricous slippery situation is that ? To what troubles and temptations and dangers is it exposed ? and how continually standing in need of especial grace to prevent it from falling ? How difficultly is it obtained ? how easily is it lost ? How few may it chance to please ? how many is it sure to offend ? and which are most in number its false friends or its real enemies ? And what are riches and grandeur and power to a man, when he is going to leave them, and he knoweth not how soon he may leave them all behind him ? If not before, yet then certainly we shall be forced to acknowledge religion to be our truest riches, and all the rest to be “ vanity and
 “ vexation of spirit.”

But 2dly *pleasure* or the gratification of the senses may be thought to be nearer and dearer to a man than his estate or outward circumstances. This indeed is what is usually called *pleasure*, but surely it is one of the lowest of the kind, and hardly deserves the name. It is the happiness not of the man but of the beast, and probably what the beasts enjoy in much greater perfection than we do. It may be honey in the mouth, but it is poison in the stomach ;
 ruins

ruins the estate, impairs the understanding, terminates in loss of health, loss of reputation, and above all loss of harmony and peace of mind. If a man engageth in such a course through the heat of youth and hurry of passion, time and experience will probably convince him of his folly, and reclaim him; and then when he cometh to reflect upon his conduct, he will find that he hath been treasuring up in his youth repentance for his old age. Or if he continues the same scene when he is old, his enemies cannot wish him to make a more contemptible figure, than between impotence and desire, snow without and fire within. The ancients represented this sensual pleasure very properly under the character of Circe, who by her cups and her charms transformed men into beasts; Every wise man, every Ulysses will be careful to avoid them.

But perhaps you are not of a taste so gross and sensual; you are for pleasures more refined, painting to feast the eyes, music to ravish the ears, with other entertainments of the like nature. But are you sure that you have really any skill and judgment in these things? for most men admire them out of vanity and affectation, and are at a great expense to see in effect with others eyes, and to hear with others ears. But if your pleasures of this kind are real, yet can you be always gazing upon fine pictures, always hearing the voice of singing-men and singing-women; or is there not soon a satiety

of these delights, and then a weariness? They may please at proper seasons and intervals, but it is impossible for them to delight always. Happiness must be something more vital and substantial than a dead form or an empty sound. In what then shall we place our happiness? shall we go round in a circle from diversion to diversion, from amusement to amusement, and be continually repeating compounding and varying them? But when a man maketh his pleasure his business, he will find it a greater drudgery than his business itself. And how often will he meet with disappointments? how often will his enjoyments fall short of his expectations? how often will he be encountered by reflections in his serious hours, that the life of man was not made for trifles, that he was born for some higher and nobler end? And after all nothing that is external, nothing that depends upon the senses, can be the proper happiness of man. It must be something within, something in the heart and soul. What else can accompany us through every stage of life, in adversity as well as in prosperity, in sickness as well as in health, dying as well as living? And what a poor abandoned miserable creature is a man of pleasure in distress, in sickness, and at the hour of death? If not before, yet then certainly we shall be forced to acknowledge religion to be our greatest pleasure, and all the rest to be "vanity and vexation of spirit."

3. It may be thought therefore that *knowledge* must be the principal pleasure of man, being the pleasure of the principal part of man, the food and delight of the understanding. And it must be owned, that knowledge surpasseth ignorance as much (Eccles. II. 13.) "as light excelleth darkness:" but still it is not without its allays, and is far, very far from happiness. For with what pains and study is it acquired? and (Eccles. XII. 12.) "study is a weariness to the flesh." There is no getting this ore but by digging in the mine. And though we are long in acquiring it, yet how soon do we forget it? Our minds are somewhat like broken vessels, which run out more than they contain. And even what we do contain, how short is it of the truth and nature of things? Where we are relieved by science in one case, we are perplexed with uncertainty in a thousand: and shall we receive more pleasure from the little that we know, or mortification from the great deal that we know not? And even to know more than the rest of mankind, what is it but to be more sensible of the frailties and infirmities of human nature? what is it but to have a deeper insight into the faults of others, and a quicker feeling of our own? what is it but to have a nicer taste and judgment, and consequently to meet with many more things to offend than to please; to lessen the pleasures and heighten the evils of life in several instances, to approve only where others admire,

admire, and to be shocked where others only dislike? And neither is success in the world always proportionable to merit; for (Eccles. IX. 11.) "neither is bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all." Your superiors grow jealous of you, your equals rival and oppose you, your inferiors envy or fear you. Nay how often are men, like Socrates of old and Galileo in later times, persecuted only for their superior knowledge, and condemned by their contemporaries for asserting those truths, which gain them reverence among all posterity? So true it is at least in these instances, as the wisest of men (Eccles. I. 18.) observed long ago, that "in much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." That is the best wisdom which will make us "wise unto salvation," and without that all the rest is "vanity and vexation of spirit."

II. It appears then that religion is our greatest pleasure by considering in the first place the little satisfaction that is to be found in all other pleasures. It will still farther appear by considering, as we proposed in the second place, the peculiar properties and advantages of religious pleasures above all others. And as for method's sake we showed the vanity and emptiness of other pleasures with respect to power or the goods of fortune, with respect to pleasure

or the gratifications of the senses, with respect to knowledge as the food and delight of the understanding; so we will show the superiority and advantages of religious pleasures in each of these respects.

1. With respect to *power* or outward circumstances, if religion doth not give riches, yet it contributes what is better, and what all the riches in the world cannot purchase, contentment. It is a tedious endless task to accommodate our circumstances to our wants and wishes; it is a much easier and a much readier way to happiness to proportion our wants and accommodate our wishes to our circumstances. Men commonly grow in their desires, as they grow in their fortunes; but he who is blessed with the spirit of contentment, hath all that the world can give. Wealth without it is poor, and even poverty with it is rich. "Godliness with contentment," as the apostle saith, (1 Tim. VI. 6.) "is great gain."

Nor doth religion only beget contentment, but it giveth a man a certain dignity and authority, which the greatest can never acquire without it. The rods and axes of tyrants may extort an outward respect and reverence, but nothing commands the hearts and affections of men like goodness. Religion conciliates the love and esteem of the world; religion establisheth a fair character and unblemished reputation; religion enjoins honesty in our dealings, oeconomy in our expenses, industry in our vocations;

cations; religion derives the blessing of God upon our undertakings, and either insures success, or converts even a disappointment into a blessing: and all the good, all the pleasure therefore that results from hence is the genuine effect and fruit of religion.

Nor doth religion conduce only to the happiness of single persons, but likewise of families; nor only of private families, but likewise of public states and kingdoms; reconciles enmities, and cements friendships; maketh obedience a delight, and government a blessing. A good man also rejoiceth in the flourishing state of others as well as his own. Little minds feel only for themselves, but the good man hath his relations, his friends, his country, and indeed the whole world to make him happy. He wisheth well to all, and if it was in his power would do good to all; and for the same reason he taketh pleasure in their prosperity, and esteems the blessings which happen to them as blessings in some degree to himself.

2. With respect to *the pleasures of sense* religion freeth a man from the dominion and perturbation of his appetites and passions, and establisheth a perfect serenity and calm within. Nor is it less conducive to his health than his ease, prescribing the best regimen for health temperance soberness and chastity. It will either prevent sickness, or be the greatest support under it. For (Prov. XVIII. 13.) "the spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity,"

There is no cordial like a good conscience. "Length of days is in her right-hand," as Solomon speaketh (Prov. III. 16.) with respect to the body; and with respect to the estate or outward circumstances, "and in her left-hand riches and honor." Indeed if pilgrimages and penances, whipping and walking barefoot, and such like corporal severities, were parts of religion, we could not presume to recommend it as a thing so easy and engaging: but we know very well whose contrivances these are and for what purpose: religion disclaims all such fooleries, and abridgeth us of no pleasures, no gratifications which are innocent; and they are hightened by this reflection that they are tasted with innocence.

You may perhaps observe in contradiction to this doctrine, that religion is often represented in scripture by *running, striving, wrestling, taking up our cross*, and the like metaphors, which imply it to be no easy attainment, but a matter of great pains and difficulty. But these expressions in their full force relate to the primitive times of the gospel, which were times of persecution. Now religion is not exposed to these fiery trials from without, the difficulty ariseth all from within: and this difficulty is nothing to the trouble that men usually take in pursuit of their unlawful pleasures. Men may get to heaven with half the pains they commonly earn damnation. This difficulty too is chiefly at our first entrance into a religious

gious course; and how then can it be reasonably imputed to religion, when it hath been originally owing to the want of it? And even during the struggle, there is a secret pleasure to observe how we gain ground every day in virtue, how passion groweth weaker and weaker, and reason stronger and stronger. There is more satisfaction even in the severities of religion, more delight even in the melancholy of a quiet conscience, than in all the noisy mirth of those who have (Isa. V. 12.) "the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine in their feasts, but regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands." There is no such thing as pure and perfect pleasure in this world; and who would not esteem a little evil a good for the sake of obtaining an infinitely greater good? who would not willingly give a small sum to purchase a great estate in reversion? In short if religion be "a yoke," it is an "easy yoke;" (Matt. XI. 30.) if "a burden," it is "a light burden." It is as our liturgy expresseth it, "a service that is perfect freedom."

But 3dly the principal pleasure of religion is with respect to *the soul*, the soul being the proper seat of happiness. Now religion is a pleasure rational, angelical, divine. It is a pleasure altogether in our own power, that none can give us, none can take away from us. It is the pleasure of both states, of both worlds,

worlds, of life and immortality, of time and eternity.

Of all knowlege it is the most pleasant and delightful; the knowlege of the best things, the knowlege of the greatest things, the knowlege of the newest things, and such as we could never have known without it. And if Pythagoras could offer up a whole hecatomb, if Archimedes could run about transported, at the discovery of some mathematical truths; how much more ought we to rejoice in the glorious light of revelation?

Nor is it only most pleasant to know, but also most delightful to practise; 'tis harmony of mind, 'tis decency of action; a pleasure that never satiates, that never wearies; but the more we do good, the more always we delight to do it.

Nor doth it only please while it is doing, but likewise after it is done; and there are very few pleasures, which will please upon reflection, or even bear a remembrance. There is certainly no pride, no satisfaction like that which diffuseth itself over the heart, when our conduct hath been just, and we have done our duty. It is almost proverbial, that a good conscience is a continual feast. It abates the evils, and doubles the pleasures of life. The applause of the world given to virtue is a desirable thing, but the approbation of one's own mind is more worth than ten thousand witnesses. " And beloved, (1 John III. 21.) if
" our

"our heart condemn us not, then have we
"confidence toward God."

Such are the pleasures of religion, that it
not only delights with the remembrance of the
past, but also giveth the most pleasing hope
and prospect of the future. Nor doth this re-
ligious hope desert us in the last extremity, but
rather increaseth as the time of our dissolution
approacheth, like the sun gilding the clear
evening with cheerful rays, and appearing
greater the nearer it is to setting. A man is
raised above the world, who hath heaven in
his view. He seemeth already more than
mortal; and what is begun in grace here, will
be consummated in glory hereafter, in pleasures
(1 Cor. II. 9.) "such as eye hath not seen,
nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the
"heart of man to conceive."

And now you see that Solomon uttered no
paradox but a certain truth, when he affirmed
of religion, that "her ways are ways of
"pleasantness." But if Solomon cannot be
heard, yet at least let Epicurus. He placeth
indeed (1) the summum bonum or chief good
of man in pleasure; but pleasure he asserts is
inseparable from virtue, and virtue from plea-
sure; and can our modern Epicureans pretend
to understand pleasure better than the ancient?
O consider this, all ye, who (Eccles. XI. 9.)

"walk
(1) *Ὁρα τὴν ἡδονὴν ὅτι ἀνὰ τὴν τοῦ ἡνδῶς, καὶ τοῦ ἡνδῶς τὸν
ἀπολαύσεως καὶ παύσεως, καὶ δικαιοῦς ἀνὴρ ἐστὶν ἀχρηστός. Epicurus apud
τὸν ἡνδῶς. Κυριότατος γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετή.* Diog. Laert.

Clamat

“ walk in the ways of your heart and in the
“ sight of your eyes, but think not that for
“ all these things God will bring you into
“ judgment.” The *men of pleasure* rightly
understood are the men of virtue and religion.
It is in vain to be followers of happiness, and
not to be followers of God. Thou, O God,
art infinitely happy in thyself, and art the
source of happiness to all thy creatures. “ How
“ excellent is thy loving kindness, O God !
“ (Psal. XXXVI. 7, &c.) therefore shall the
“ children of men put their trust under the
“ shadow of thy wings. Thou shalt make
“ them drink of the river of thy pleasures ;
“ For with thee is the fountain of life, and
“ in thy light shall we see light.” “ Thou
“ wilt show us the path of life, (Psal. XVI.
“ 11.) in thy presence is fulness of joy, and
“ at thy right-hand there are pleasures for
“ evermore.”

Clamat Epicurus is, quem justèque vivatur; nec sapienter
vos nimis voluptatibus esse de- honestè justè, nisi jucundè. Tor-
ditum dicitis, “ non posse ju- quatus apud Ciceronem De Fin.
eunde vivi, nisi sapienter honeste Lib. 1. Cap. 18.

DISSERTATION XVII.

Religion our greatest comfort.

A Man must have seen little, and have made less observation, who is not thoroughly convinced, that it is in vain to expect any such thing as pure and perfect happiness here below. Our imaginations may beat about and hunt after it, but we shall find it no where in this land of the living. Trouble is more or less the condition of all mankind; and neither the knowledge of the wisest, nor the wealth of the richest, nor the power of the greatest, nor the virtue of the best of men, can wholly exempt them from it. Life at best is a chequered scene, a mixture of good and evil; and those who enjoy more of the good to their share, we call happy; those who suffer more of the evil, we reckon unfortunate.

As trouble then more or less is the necessary condition of life, the fatal and unavoidable lot and portion of mankind, it is as much vanity to think to live altogether free from it, as it is prudence to consider how we may patiently bear it, whenever God shall be pleased to lay it upon us. And let no man think himself above consulting what is the best expedient to enable us to bear affliction; for even the most prosperous

prosperous know not how soon it may come to their turn to try it: and for what may happen at any time to any man, all men should at all times be provided.

Now the best provision, the best expedient in this case is that which is suggested by the wisest of men, (Prov. III. 17.) "And all her paths are peace." He is speaking of wisdom, and we all know that by *wisdom* in the language of scripture is meant *religion*. (Job XXXVIII. 28.) "The fear of the Lord that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding." Of this wisdom he draweth a most amiable character, and among other excellent qualities he saith, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." That is, as our learned paraphrast (Bishop Patrick) expresseth it, "There is a singular pleasure, nay the highest delight, in all the acts of virtue to which wisdom directs her followers: who are always either in perfect safety by well doing; or if any trouble come upon them, have that inward tranquillity and satisfaction, which nothing else could give them." So that religion, as it is our greatest pleasure in prosperity, is likewise our greatest comfort in adversity. It will either supply us with never failing delights; or if we fall into any affliction, will be our greatest support under it. Here then is the true specific for the troubles and calamities of human life; and all other lenitives are no better than quack

remedies and counterfeits. Religion is our greatest comfort; and so will it evidently appear by considering in the first place how little comfort is to be found in other things, and by showing more particularly in the second place the comforts which religion will afford us, when all other expedients prove ineffectual. By this survey it will appear, that nothing can administer solid comfort but religion; and religion will, if we will practise it. Religion is building upon a rock, and every thing else hath no better foundation than the sand.

For I. how little comfort is to be found in the world or the things of the world? We may try ever so many expedients, but we shall be disappointed in all; as men in a fever are continually turning from side to side, from posture to posture, and find rest in none.

Some persons, we may observe, betake themselves to drinking to keep up their spirits, and so drown their sorrows and their senses together. Indeed the scripture saith in a certain place, (Prov. XXXI. 6, 7.) "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of heavy hearts; Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more:" and how negligent soever they are of the other commands of scripture, yet they take care to fulfil this literally. But the scripture is only making a comparison that it is better for the "afflicted" to drink than for "princes, lest they pervert judgment;"

“ judgment ;” and though it designs not to make men Rechabites absolutely to abstain from wine, though it may prescribe in some cases the moderate use, yet certainly it never intended the abuse of it. And great caution is required, lest by drinking a little and a little we come in time to want a great deal ; for this is a remedy worse than the disease. These artificial spirits are nothing like the natural. Mirth may be the pretence, but it is really infatuation and madness. Besides this mirth such as it is is short and transient ; a man even sleepeth it away ; and after a few hours when the fumes of liquor are evaporated, and sober reflection returns, his melancholy returns with redoubled force ; and he feeleth himself so much the more oppressed, as he was before exalted. (Prov. XXIII. 29, &c.) “ Who hath wo ? “ who hath sorrow ? who hath redness of eyes ? “ They that tarry long at the wine, they that “ go to seek mixt wine ; At last it biteth like “ a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.” I mention none of the other fatal consequences of this vice, but only observe how vainly we shall expect any comfort from hence ; and it would be a strange method of cure indeed, that we may not grieve like men, to live like brutes.

Some again may perhaps imagin that sorrow is to be charmed down by music, as David with his harp played the evil spirit out of Saul. Is affliction then like the sting of a tarantula to

be cured by symphony and found? Alas! at such a time it will be grating to your ear rather than pleasing; or if it be a charm, it is a charm that lasteth but a little while; as in the case of Saul, though we read "once" (1 Sam. XVI. 23.) that the evil spirit was chased away, yet we read "twice" afterwards (XVIII. 10, 11. XIX. 10.) that it returned again, and then neither the harp nor the harper could have the like effect, but "Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with a javelin."

You may hope then to lose reflection amidst company and diversions. But true sorrow generally loveth to be alone, and conversation at such a time will be thought rather an impertinence than a pleasure. You may fly into company but you cannot fly from yourself. Your thoughts will still be your own. Your evil genius will still haunt you, and like Dæmocrates his sword, or the hand-writing on Belshazzar's wall, extinguish all your gaiety and pleasure.

Business might have a better effect in employing our minds and diverting our thoughts; but commonly, instead of business removing our sorrows, our sorrows will not suffer us to apply to business.

As riches cannot prevent trouble, so neither can they cure it (1). Not house and land, not silver

(1) Non domus et fundus, non aris acervus et aurum.
Egrotò domini deduxit corpore febres.
Non animò curas; valeat possessor oportet,
Si comportatis rebus bene cogitat ani.

silver and gold, can remove a fever from the body, or dispel cares from the mind. The possessor must be well (his body in health and his mind at ease) to have a proper taste and relish of them; otherwise all his wealth and fortune will be to him, as pictures to the blind, or music to the deaf.

Even the pity and commiseration of friends is often a poor remedy for sorrow. It may perhaps more weaken and enervate the mind than confirm and strengthen it. But if there is any comfort or advantage in it, the virtuous have the best right and title to it. Who will not pity us, if we be followers of that which is good? and who will, if we be followers of that which is evil? We cannot help commiserating a good man in distress, though a stranger; but though nature may plead strong, it is pity thrown away to pity even a worthless relation.

There is little consolation then in things without; can we find any more comfort within? A natural good temper is indeed a spring of cheerfulness; but if it will contribute something to our ease without religion, how much more will it contribute with religion, with grace grafted on nature.

Superior knowledge is so far from being a remedy for sorrow, that according to the wisest of

*Qui cupit aut metale, juvat illum sit domus et res,
Ut lippum pictæ tabulæ, fomenta podagram,
Auriculas etharæ collecta torde dolentes.*

Hor. Epist. 2. Lib. 1.

(2) *Permittea*

of men (Eccles. I. 18.) " he that increaseth
" knowlege increaseth sorrow." Superior
knowlege serveth only to sharpen our natural
sense and feeling, giveth us the more exquisite
and painful sensation of evils present, and the
surer foresight and quicker apprehension of
evils to come.

Reason is an excellent thing; but when a
man is in agony, what philosophy can reason
it down? The philosophers in this case agree
neither with one another, nor with the truth.
Some assert that all events are casual, and there-
fore we should not be concerned for what hap-
pens only by chance. But if there were no
direction but chance, we should have just rea-
son for sorrow indeed. The world without a
providence would be much more miserable than
the world without a sun. Others maintain on
the contrary that all events are fatal, and there-
fore we should not grieve for what cannot be
helped. But we grieve for this very reason
because it cannot be helped; and it must be
rare comfort to a man, to deny all possibility
of hope the last refuge of the miserable, and
to tell him that his evils are without remedy.
Some have even questioned whether there be
any such thing as evil or pain: but we may as
well doubt of the reality of our own being;
there is no need of arguing against such absurdi-
ties, our very feeling will convince us. Others
again have allowed that there are evils indeed,
but they are not evils to a wise man. But this

is to raise the wise man above humanity, or to sink him below it; to aggrandize him into a god to be exempt from evils, or to degrade him into a stock or stone not to be sensible of them. In short the sayings of the philosophers carry more of the semblance of comfort than of the substance; they will rather please us in reading than support us in practice; for the proverbial language of Isaiah (XXVIII. 20.) “the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.” If the philosophers have offered any thing solid and substantial in this kind, they have borrowed it all from religion, from the belief of a God and the notion of a future state. As Prometheus is said to have fetched his fire from heaven, so their most shining thoughts were lighted up from some scattered beams, some traditionary truths of revelation.

II. Which leadeth me to what was farther proposed, namely to show more particularly in the second place the comforts which religion will afford us when all other expedients prove ineffectual. Now religion administers to our consolation, as by various ways and in various manners, so particularly in the following accounts.

I. In the estimation of religion several of the evils of life are no real evils. The religious man's affections are in great measure disengaged from this world; he is perfectly easy and indifferent

of men (Eccles. I. 18.) "he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." Superior knowledge serveth only to sharpen our natural sense and feeling, giveth us the more exquisite and painful sensation of evils present, and the surer foresight and quicker apprehension of evils to come.

Reason is an excellent thing; but when a man is in agony, what philosophy can reason it down? The philosophers in this case agree neither with one another, nor with the truth. Some assert that all events are casual, and therefore we should not be concerned for what happens only by chance. But if there were no direction but chance, we should have just reason for sorrow indeed. The world without a providence would be much more miserable than the world without a sun. Others maintain on the contrary that all events are fatal, and therefore we should not grieve for what cannot be helped. But we grieve for this very reason because it cannot be helped; and it must be rare comfort to a man, to deny all possibility of hope the last refuge of the miserable, and to tell him that his evils are without remedy. Some have even questioned whether there be any such thing as evil or pain: but we may as well doubt of the reality of our own being; there is no need of arguing against such absurdities, our very feeling will convince us. Others again have allowed that there are evils indeed, but they are not evils to a wise man. But this

is to raise the wise man above humanity, or to sink him below it; to aggrandize him into a god to be exempt from evils, or to degrade him into a stock or stone not to be sensible of them. In short the sayings of the philosophers carry more of the semblance of comfort than of the substance; they will rather please us in reading than support us in practice; for the proverbial language of Isaiah (XXVIII. 20.) "the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it." If the philosophers have offered any thing solid and substantial in this kind, they have borrowed it all from religion, from the belief of a God and the notion of a future state. As Prometheus is said to have fetched his fire from heaven, so their most shining thoughts were lighted up from some scattered beams, some traditionary truths of revelation.

II. Which leadeth me to what was farther proposed, namely to show more particularly in the second place the comforts which religion will afford us when all other expedients prove ineffectual. Now religion administers to our consolation, as by various ways and in various manners, so particularly in the following accounts.

I. In the estimation of religion several of the evils of life are no real evils. The religious man's affections are in great measure disengaged from this world; he is perfectly easy and indif-

ferent to several things, which others pursue with eagerness and solicitude: and consequently fewer misfortunes can affect him, fewer disappointments can touch him; he riseth like a rock in the midst of the sea superior to all the waves and surges which beat at his feet. He considers himself only as a stranger and sojourner upon earth; his thoughts and wishes are fixed upon his home, his heavenly country, and he reckons things good or evil chiefly as they facilitate or obstruct his passage thither; and consequently what are misfortunes in the eye of the world, in his eye are often blessings. He seeth that in the lottery of life blanks and prizes happen indiscriminately to the righteous and to the wicked; and therefore as prosperity is no sure token of the divine favor, so neither is adversity any certain mark of the divine displeasure; and as he is not much elated with the one, so neither is he much dejected with the other. He knoweth that affliction is often the portion of the favorites of heaven, that (Heb. XII. 6.) "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." What are evils and punishments to others, to him are only trials of patience and occasions of virtue, and therefore he looketh upon affliction as the post of honor, (James I. 2, 3, 4.) he "counteth it all joy when he falleth into divers temptations, knowing this that the trying of his faith worketh patience," and if "patience have her perfect

“fect work, he shall be perfect and entire
“wanting nothing.”

2. Religion will convert and improve the real evils of life, if not into temporal, yet certainly into spiritual benefits. Men indeed would rather choose an uninterrupted course of prosperity; they would sail smoothly and securely down the stream of life, with no storms to alarm, with no gales to ruffle them, little considering, that prosperity is a Siren which often deludes them to their ruin, and that adversity is the school of disciplin, often intended for their temporal, but always for their spiritual good.

With regard to our temporal good, as “the prosperity of fools,” according to the observation of Solomon, (Prov. I. 32.) “shall destroy them;” so the adversity of wise men will preserve them. Prosperity rendereth men secure and careless, and the higher they are elevated, the lower they fall: Adversity teacheth caution and circumspection, and the more afraid they are of disgrace, the more likely they are to attain to honor. Prosperity renderth men proud and opinionated, full of themselves and neglectful of others, and thereby exposeth them to the contempt and hatred of mankind: Adversity naturally disposeth the mind to humility and modesty, to be diffident of ourselves and obliging to others; and thereby conciliates pity and esteem, and often procures friends beyond all hope and expectation. Prosperity

is rash and precipitate, and rusheth into dangers with as little sense or reflection as "the horse rusheth into the battle:" Adversity is more slow and prudent, if it hath not so much to venture, neither hath it so much to lose; its fall cannot be so great, and its rise may be greater. Prosperity relaxes and enervates the spirits, so that men are less able to struggle with any difficulties or distresses which may happen to befall them: Adversity braces and fortifies the mind; being accustomed to distress, they are less sensible of it; being inured to difficulties, they can more easily surmount them; and the greatest men in arts and arms have usually risen out of adversity. Some share of evil too is requisite to make us rightly relish and enjoy the good things of life with which we are surrounded. We should be less sensible of the advantages of good health, if we were not sometimes visited by sickness. Our pleasure is the greater in the company and conversation of the dearest friends after some interruption and separation. The fear of losing a thing often doubles the enjoyment of it: and when we have escaped safe to land, how pleasing is it to look back upon the stormy ocean! when we have surmounted any difficulties and dangers, how comfortable is the reflection upon our delivery! It is much higher satisfaction to have overcome the trial than never to have been tried at all.

But

But the principal benefit of afflictions is with regard to our spiritual good, which it is our own fault if they do not always promote, as this is always the gracious intention of providence in afflicting the children of men. Affliction is the best physic of the mind, and will restore it to a wholesome state, when nothing else can. It naturally abateth all vain and presumptuous thoughts, and inspireth us with true humility. "Pride," as the wise man saith, (Ecclus X. 18.) "was not made for men," and much less for men in affliction. It sheweth us our own imbecillity and weakness, and convinceth us of our inability and insufficiency as of ourselves to help ourselves. We are apt to think of it too little at other times, but then we see and feel and lament that we are frail indigent creatures. It putteth us upon recollecting and considering our ways, what sins we have been guilty of, and which of our transgressions hath drawn down this heavy judgment upon us. If it was not for some such friendly admonition, we might go on without thinking or reflecting even to ruin and perdition. As it putteth us upon considering, so likewise upon reforming our manners, as the most effectual means to extricate and deliver us. The effect will be the same with every good man as with the good psalmist, (Psal. CXIX. 59, 60.) "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies; I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments."

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He must be a monster of a man indeed, whom afflictions cannot soften, and bring to a sense of his duty. Of what metal must that temper be composed, which is not melted in this fire? He who can still persist in resisting these strong calls to grace, must be a Pharaoh hardened and devoted to destruction. In prosperity we suffer so few of the inconveniences of life ourselves, that we are apt to have little feeling, little compassion for the distresses of others; like the rich man in the parable, who was "cloathed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day," but regarded not poor Lazarus who was laid at his gate full of "sores." But afflictions, as they show us our own weakness, so naturally dispose us to be more compassionate to others. Experiencing the evils of life, we learn to pity those evils; and from the sense of our own sufferings are led to relieve and assist those of other men. In prosperity we are inclined to grow too fond of the world and of the things of the world. We think it "good for us to be here," and are for erecting tabernacles for ourselves, as if we were to dwell and abide in them for ever. But if nothing else, yet afflictions will wean our affections from this world, and teach us to fix them there where only true joys are to be found. Seeing the uncertainty and insufficiency of all worldly enjoyments, we can no more depend upon them for true happiness, but must necessarily seek it elsewhere. Seeing our dearest friends

friends and relations go before us, we have the less inducement to be desirous of staying here behind. Feeling the pains and miseries of life, we grow more indifferent to life itself, and become even willing “to be dissolved and to be with Christ.”

3. The belief of a God and a providence is another means to calm and moderate our grief. For he is of infinite power and therefore most able, of infinite goodness and therefore most willing, of infinite wisdom and therefore knoweth best both how and when to succur us. And what a satisfaction must it be to live under such a government, to consider that all our affairs are under the disposal of one, who knoweth and willeth what is convenient for us better than we do for ourselves; and though no calamity for the present is joyous but grievous, yet every thing taken into the account that certainly is best which infinite wisdom seeth best should befall us. If there is any consolation in friendship, what friend and protector can we desire more than almighty goodness? (Psal. XXVII. 1.) “The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?” He hath engaged in an especial manner to hear the prayers of the afflicted; he hath promised to deliver them out of their distress; he will even turn their sorrow into joy, and pleasure after pain is double pleasure. (Matt. V. 4.) “Blessed are they

“ they that mourn, for they shall be comfort-
 ed.” (Psal. CXXVI. 5, 6.) “ They that
 sow in tears, shall reap in joy. He that
 goeth forth and weepeth bearing precious
 seed, shall doubtless come again with re-
 joicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”
 There are not only innumerable examples in
 scripture, but we may appeal to the experience
 of every good man, whether he hath not some
 times had surprising deliverances and escaped
 imminent dangers without his own care and
 foresight, whether friends have not been raised
 up to him upon special occasions whom he
 never dreamed of or imagined before, whether
 the most prosperous circumstances of his life
 are not owing merely to lucky hits, such as
 cannot be ascribed to his own policy or con-
 trivance, but happened altogether without his
 design and beyond his expectations, and plainly
 point out a superior power who directed all
 events to his advantage. Our disappointments
 are often the most lucky incidents in our lives,
 and frequently turn out afterwards to be our
 greater advantage; as Saul looking for his fa-
 ther's lost asses came to be anointed king.
 Certainly (2) God seeth best what is best for
 us and most suitable to our affairs, and every
 man is dearer to him than to himself. How
 hath many a man solicited for a place and been
 a candidate for preferment, and yet notwith-
 standing

(2) Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
 Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris?

standing his merits been disappointed in his just hopes and pretensions ! but that very disappointment hath perhaps contributed to the raising of his character, procured him new friends, and proved the occasion of his getting something afterwards better than what he had missed before. How hath many a man experienced fortunate crosses, and escaped perils of waters and perils of robbers by some unlucky accident (as he then thought it) intervening and retarding or hastening his coming to the time and place that he had intended and where he was expected ! How hath many a man by a lesser illness prevented a greater, and by enduring a painful operation become free from pain, had his life preserved and prolonged by some chronical distemper, or been almost dying of an acute disease that hath given a new turn to his constitution, and established his health better than ever it was before ! So certain it is as St. Paul hath asserted, (Rom. VIII. 28.) that " all things," even disappointments and afflictions, " work together for good to them " that love God."

But 4thly if religion will not deliver us out of all our troubles, yet at least it will afford us the best supports under them, secure the peace of a good conscience, and obtain the assistance of divine grace to strengthen us. As sin is the sting of death, so likewise is it the sting

Nam pro jucundis aptissima quæque dabunt Dii :

Carior est illis homo quam sibi.

Juv. Sat. 10.

of affliction, and renders sorrow exceeding sorrowful. We can much better endure any calamity, when we are conscious to ourselves that it is not owing to our own vice and folly. Our integrity will support us, when all earthly comforts fail. No misfortunes, no injuries can rob us of a good conscience. That will remain with us even to the last; and though the storm may be great without, yet all may be calm within. And to the testimony of a good conscience will be added, as God hath promised, the assistance of divine grace to strengthen us; or if ever it be wanting, it must be charged altogether upon some failure in ourselves. Now this will inspire our prayers and inform our petitions, that they may be suitable to our state and circumstances, such as it may be proper for us to offer and for God to grant. This will infuse a secret satisfaction into our souls, and fill us (Rom. XIV. 17.) with "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." As the Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the waters, and impregnated the rude chaos; so will the same Spirit spread his enlivening wings over our cold hearts, and hatch warm comfort there. In the primitive times of Christianity this assistance was extraordinary, as extraordinary then was the occasion: but now if the supplies of grace are not so great, so neither are our wants and necessities. Of whom much is required, to them much will be given. Our strength will always be

be proportioned to our burden. For (1 Cor. X. 13.) "God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it."

5. Besides the comforts of this life there is the hope of a blessed immortality to raise and animate us in the worst of afflictions. Hope is often a pleasing phantom raised by our own vain imagination, but the hopes of heaven and happiness to a religious good man are the best hopes and upon the best grounds. And who would not "run with patience the race that is set before him," when he has the goal and the immortal prize in view? who would not bear up cheerfully against the storm, when he knoweth it will bring him safe at last to "the haven where he would be?" (Rom. VIII. 18.) "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed:" and the greater these sufferings in this world, the greater will be that glory in the world to come. The sharper our crown of thorns here, the brighter will be our crown of glory hereafter. (2 Cor. IV. 17, 18.) "For our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

6. Nor are these principles plausible only in theory, but hold good in practice; as there are likewise to encourage us examples of men who have triumphed over afflictions. In what difficulties and distresses was Joseph involved, hated by his brethren, sold into a foreign country, falsely accused there, and thrown into prison; but how were these very difficulties and distresses the foundation of his future greatness, and the means of preserving not only his own family but all Egypt! How exceeding great were the trials and afflictions of Job, but how was he recompensed for all his former sufferings even in this life, for (Job XLII. 10, 12.) "the Lord gave him twice as much as he had before, and blessed his latter end more than his beginning!" How was Moses exposed an helpless infant, and must inevitably have been either starved or drowned; but how did dangers themselves contribute to his preservation, and his desperate condition happily prove the occasion of his princely education, and raise him to be the deliverer of his country! How deplorable were Daniel's circumstances, his country depopulated, his city laid in ashes, himself carried captive into a strange nation, and there through a malicious conspiracy formed against him cast into the den of lions; but how did all these circumstances co-operate to his advantage, and what was designed for his destruction prove the instrument of his elevation, and advance him to honors and dignities which

which he could not otherwise have expected.
“ The time would fail me (Heb. XI. 32, &c.)
“ to tell of David also, and Samuel, and the
“ prophets, who through faith subdued king-
“ doms, wrought righteousness, obtained pro-
“ mises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched
“ the violence of fire, escaped the edge of
“ the sword, out of weakness were made
“ strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to
“ flight the armies of the aliens; women re-
“ ceived their dead raised to life again; and
“ others were tortured not accepting deliver-
“ ance, that they might obtain a better resur-
“ rection.” What sublime instances of pa-
tience and magnanimity are to be found among
the apostles and primitive Christians! They
were (2 Cor. IV. 8, 9. VI. 10.) “ troubled on
“ every side, yet not distressed,” they were
“ perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but
“ not forsaken, as sorrowful yet alway rejoic-
“ ing, as poor yet making many rich, as
“ having nothing and yet possessing all things.”
How was “ the Captain of our salvation”
himself “ made perfect through sufferings?”
and therefore what a compassionate as well as
powerful intercessor have we for us at the throne
of grace? and how much and how often should
we (Heb. XII. 3.) “ consider him that en-
“ dured such contradiction of sinners against
“ himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our
“ minds?” Nay have not we ourselves often
experienced the goodness of God in our afflic-

tions? have we not then felt the comforts of religion, when we were destitute of all other comforts? have we not then tasted the sweets of devotion, and thought of God with pleasure, when we could think with pleasure of nothing besides God? (Isa. LIX. 1.) "And" "is his hand now shortened that it cannot" "save? or his ear heavy that it cannot hear?" (2 Cor. I. 10.) "Who delivered us from so" "great a death and doth deliver, in him we" "may trust that he will yet deliver us."

"Wherefore (Heb. XII. 12.) lift up the" "hands which hang down and the feeble" "knees." Only let us take care, that we think of religion at other seasons besides the hour of distress and danger, that our devotion be not then first to begin, but only to be renewed and applied to the sorrowful occasion. Even they who forget God in their prosperity, do yet in their adversity remember and make their prayers unto him. The proudest hearts are then apt to be humbled. But it is much to be suspected, that that religion is not very sincere, which hath no other source, no better motive than their present afflictions; that therefore when the cause shall cease the effect will cease too, when the apprehension of danger shall vanish their devotion will vanish with it. It is the temper of a slave to crouch and tremble, while the rod is hanging over him; but when that terror is removed, instantly to return to his old course and rebel again. In such a case
even

even religion will administer little comfort, and may say unto them as she is represented saying in the words of wisdom; (Prov. P. 24, &c.)

“ Because I have called and ye refused, I have
“ stretched out my hand and no man regarded,
“ but ye have set at nought all my counsel,
“ and would none of my reproof; I also will
“ laugh at your calamity, I will mock when
“ your fear cometh; Then shall they call upon
“ me, but I will not answer, they shall seek
“ me early but they shall not find me.” Indeed

if we turn unto God with a true penitent heart and a true lively faith, with resolutions of amendment as real as our sorrow, although our lives have been ever so vicious formerly, yet (Matt. XII. 20.) “ the bruised reed will he

“ not break, the smoking flax will he not
“ quench;” (Psal. LI. 17.) “ the sacrifices
“ of God are a broken spirit, a broken and
“ contrite heart O God thou wilt not despise.”

How much more may pious souls take refuge in religion, who have always made it their practice and their delight? Through the merits of their Saviour they may (Heb. IV. 16.)

“ come boldly unto the throne of grace to
“ obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time
“ of need.” Wherefore to conclude with St.

Peter, (1 Pet. IV. 19.) “ let them that suffer
“ according to the will of God, commit the
“ keeping of their souls to him in well-doing,
“ as unto a faithful creator.”

DISSERTATION XVIII.

On the government of the thoughts.

FEW persons are so profligate and abandoned as to have no regard to their words and actions, those necessarily exposing them to the judgment and censure of mankind; but few again have the like care and concern in the regulating of their thoughts, these being known only to themselves and escaping the notice and observation of all others: A certain indication that we value the opinion of the world more than the satisfaction of our own consciences, and attend rather to what others think of us than to what we feel and experience within ourselves. There are some persons who can think with pleasure of those things which yet they are afraid of acting or speaking; they can be decent perhaps in their outward behaviour, but their inward thoughts are very wickedness; and others who do not purposely allow and indulge themselves in wicked thoughts, yet suffer their minds to run adrift, and are never at the pains of choosing and selecting their ideas, but take up with any as time or chance, different objects or different occasions present.

But the wisest of men was of far other sentiments, and knew very well that upon the regulation

gulation of our thoughts depends the regulation of our lives. "Keep thy heart," saith he (Prov. IV. 23.) watch and guard all the thoughts inclinations and affections of thy mind, "with all diligence," not with ordinary care and caution but with the greatest vigilance and exactness, "for out of it are the issues of life," for from thence proceed the determinations and actions of life. Such are his thoughts usually, such is the man. As they are well or ill governed, his conversation and behaviour will be better or worse. Good or bad habits of thinking naturally produce good or bad habits of living; as a tree will bring forth fruit, and a fountain send forth water, good or bad, sweet or bitter according to their own nature.

The government of our thoughts therefore being the principal thing in life ought to be likewise our principal concern and business: and in the prosecution of this subject we will endeavor to show in the *former* part of our discourse, that we are accountable for our thoughts, and how far we are accountable for them and able to govern them; and having shown how far we are able to govern them, we will in the *latter* part offer some rules and directions for the better regulation and government of them accordingly. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

1. Under our first general head we are to show, that we are accountable for our thoughts, and

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and how far we are accountable for them and able to govern them. It is commonly said that thoughts are free, and they are so far free indeed as to be above all jurisdiction and even all cognisance of men; but they are subject however to omnipresence and omniscience, and (Heb. IV. 13.) "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do," or rather, as the words may better be translated, *προς ὃν ἡμεῖς ὁ λογος*, "to whom we are to render an account:" and this is the excellence of religion and the divine laws above human laws and constitutions, that whereas the latter only bind the outward man and regard only overtacts and discourses, the former reach the very conscience, and controll our inmost thoughts as well as our words and actions. Very good reason there is therefore that we should regulate the motions and inclinations of our hearts, because (1 John III. 20.) "God is greater than our hearts and knoweth all things," as well as because from thence, as the text expresseth it, "are the issues of life;" our words and actions take their tincture and color from our thoughts, and however we may dissemble our inward sentiments, yet generally out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh and the hand acteth. The prophet therefore (Isa. LV. 7.) exhorts "the wicked to forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and to return unto the Lord:" and again another prophet (Jer.

(Jer. IV. 14.) "Wash thine heart from wickedness that thou mayest be saved, how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" Our Saviour accounts an unlawful desire in some measure the same as an unlawful act; (Matt. V. 28.) "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." The old world was destroyed by a deluge of waters, (Gen. VI. 3.) "because the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually;" and in the last great day we shall be accountable for our thoughts as well as for our words and actions, for (Rom. II. 16.) "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ," and (Eccles. XII. 14.) "God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."

We are accountable therefore for our thoughts in general, but in some particular cases it is plainly out of our power to govern them; and God is not so cruel a task-master as to require of us impossibilities, and to condemn us for what we have no means nor opportunities of preventing or helping. We cannot always command the first motions and inclinations of our mind; they are often moved and impelled as it were by an invisible hand we know not how. Strange irregular fancies sometimes rise in our heads whether we will or not; there is

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no room for reason to interpose and prevent them; they rush of a sudden into the mind, and all that we are able to do is to get rid of them as soon as ever we can; and we may be assured that they will never be imputed to us, they are no farther criminal than we voluntarily pursue and indulge them.

Neither can we command our thoughts always, when any passion as anger love sorrow or the like possesses us, or when any great uneasiness or urgent business engages our attention. For the time they ingross all the powers and faculties of our souls, and though we may chance to dispel the busy swarm of ideas, yet they soon gather again, and renew their molestation. In many cases perhaps we may be able to avoid the occasions of passion, but when passion hath once taken hold of us, it will for a longer or a shorter term, in some more in others less, remain master of the mind. The best natured man living provoked to anger by any injury is at that very time full of the injury, and cannot instantly compose his thoughts, and recover his usual serenity of temper. A person deeply in love cannot help thinking frequently of the beloved object; this will still keep the ascendent in the mind, and there is scarce any turning the stream and current of the imaginations another way. A fond parent who hath lost an only child, or a tender husband who hath buried the wife of his bosom, can no more help feeling and regretting such

an

an affliction, than they can help being hurt with the cutting off of a right-hand or the plucking out of a right-eye: and it is not all the reason and philosophy in the world that can charm down their sorrow; it is well if time can wear out the impression, and restore them to the mastery and dominion of their thoughts again.

As any passion or uneasiness of mind, so likewise an ill habit of body may deprive us of the power and command over our own thoughts. An acute pain will necessarily call off our attention from other things to itself. A raging fever may fill us with phrenzy and delirium. Spleen and melancholy may possess us with a thousand frightful ideas, the most unworthy and despairing notions of ourselves, the most horrid and unjust apprehensions of God. Our own imaginations may terrify us more than so many ghosts and spectres: and they will be continually haunting us, there is no getting the better of this disorder and confusion in the mind, but by curing the distemper in the body. It appears then that the government of our thoughts is not an absolute but a limited government, and especially in the cases above mentioned; but in all other instances I conceive they are very much in our own power, and so far as they are in our own power, so far we are accountable for them and no farther. But let us not lazily imagin our power to be less than it really is, nor impute that to necessity,

sity, which ought rather to be charged upon our own indolence and indulgence. If the mind is passive in some instances, in others again it is as active. We plainly experience in ourselves a power of turning our thoughts to whatever subject we please; and though sometimes ideas may arise involuntary in the mind; yet usually we can select such as we like best to dwell upon and consider and compare together. We can besides make choice of any such business or profession as we think proper, and that will give a general bent and tendency to our thoughts, and direct them very much in what chanel they shall run. We have likewise a power of transferring our thoughts from subject to subject, can lay aside one and resume another, and like the bee range from flower to flower and settle where we please. And supposing the very worst, that thoughts sometimes are forcibly obtruded upon us, we can choose however whether we will consent to them or not: and herein as I take it chiefly consists the morality or immorality of our thoughts, as we approve or disapprove, cherish or reject, assent to or dissent from the good or evil motions and suggestions of our minds. It is possible that evil imaginations may be suggested to us, perhaps by evil men, perhaps by evil spirits; but so far are they from being criminal, that they may become occasions of virtue. Our consent at least is in our own power, and nothing can render them criminal but our consent and approbation.

probation. Where is no choice, no liberty, there can be no sin.

II. Let us then proceed to our second general head, and having shown how far we are able to govern our thoughts, we will offer some rules and directions for the better regulation and government of them accordingly. The great art of governing our thoughts consists in rejecting all such as are vain and frivolous, loose and immoral, and in cherishing all such as are entertaining and useful, innocent and virtuous, and keeping a constant supply of them: and in order to accomplish these desirable ends it may be not improper to make use of the following means.

I. Let us be sure to live under an habitual sense of God's omnipresence and omniscience, that "he is about our path and about our bed," "and spieth out all our ways," that "he knoweth our down-sitting and our uprising," "and understandeth our thoughts afar off." Nothing can be more effectual to banish all loose imaginations, and to beget in us a serious and religious frame and temper of mind. A man ought not to be filthy in his ideas, no more than in his person, purely out of regard to himself; one would have a clean heart as well as clean hands if it was only for one's own sake: but if the dignity of our own human nature cannot, yet surely the dignity of the divine nature might awe us into proper and suitable sentiments; if not for the peace and
satisfaction

satisfaction of our own consciences, yet out of a sense of the consciousness of the Supreme Being, we should endeavor to think always as becomes his reasonable creatures. We should be ashamed to have all our idle fancies known even to men of like infirmities and passions with ourselves; we therefore use artifice and dissimulation, and speak not all that we think, but only all that we think proper: and how then can we endure to have the whole laid open to an all-wise God? for with him there can be no reserve and disguise, and every thought is in effect thinking aloud. Let our imaginations be ever so vain and foolish, we sit and indulge them and believe all secure, so long as they are known only to ourselves; but we should remember that they are known also to God, and ought we not to be much more afraid of the inspection and privacy of our everlasting judge, than of having them exposed to the censure of all the world? Not that we can always have God actually in our thoughts, but we may live under an habitual sense of the divine presence, and that will beget habitual purity of heart; and if at any time we perceive a loose idea or irregular desire arising, we may check it instantly with this reflection, "Shall not God search it out, for he knoweth the very secrets of the heart?" Every one who duly considers this, must "purify himself even as he is pure."

2. We should also guard against all excess of passion, and take all proper care of our health, if we would preserve the empire and sovereignty of the mind. For passion usurps a sort of tyranny over thought, and there is no asserting the liberty of the one without shaking off the dominion of the other. Our reason must be calm and undisturbed, or we can never apply steadily to a point, never examine or discuss any thing with freedom. Chains and fetters do not more restrain the motions of the body, than violent passions obstruct and hinder the operations of the mind. The less subject we are to passion, the more free we shall be to exercise and display our reason. And as we should endeavor to preserve the serenity of the mind, so we should take all reasonable care of the health of the body, as an excellent help and instrument to the governing of our thoughts. For when the body is oppressed with pain or sickness, the ablest mind cannot exert itself with its full force and freedom, as the finest hand can make but sorry harmony when the instrument is out of tune. Wine and luxurious living inflame the blood, and are not only destructive of health, but also naturally engender wild and wanton imaginations. Let us then by all means live a life of sobriety temperance and regularity; and such a life will establish health, and health will promote cheerfulness, and cheerfulness will invigorate the mind, dissipate all gloom and melancholy, and

enable us to enjoy ourselves and our own thoughts. A sound mind in a sound body is the greatest blessing in life, and one cannot be of half that value and efficacy without the other.

3. We should moreover make choice of some proper business and employment, and be very diligent therein. For as waters taste of the soil through which they flow, so the mind is tinged by a man's business and employments; and some employments and occupations necessarily expose us more to temptation than others, and naturally turn our thoughts to more indirect practices. As a man's chief employment is, so will his thoughts chiefly be; and (Matt. VI. 21.) "where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also." Let every man therefore choose for himself some honest trade or profession, and be fair and honest in the practice of it; and those whose fortunes place them above any profession, should yet either find or make some business for themselves, if it was only to divert and employ their thoughts. For the mind is an active principle; it must continually be thinking of one thing or other; and if it be not employed in good, will infallibly be busied in evil. Indeed idleness is the mother of all evil; it is while men are asleep, that the enemy soweth his tares; and as the field of the slothful is overrun with thorns and thistles, so an idle head is filled with roving fancies and loose imaginations. Let us leave dreaming therefore while we are awake, and
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be not only awake but active and industrious every one in his calling. If we keep no watch or guard, no wonder that vagrant thoughts like thieves break through and steal, steal away our most precious treasure time, nay steal us away from ourselves. They are too apt to intrude when we are otherwise employed; but wherever they find the head idle and empty, there they are sure to take full possession.

4. We should be curious likewise in the choice of our company, as a thing that will very much affect and influence our way and manner of thinking. For we are creatures strangely formed for imitation; by frequent converse we contract the notions opinions and habits of others, talk as they talk, and think as they think, and grow by insensible degrees into a wonderful similitude and resemblance. One would be desirous therefore to form one's self upon a right model, and to copy after a good original. "All our delight should be "upon the saints that are in the earth, and "upon such as excel in virtue." The purest mind must be tainted by the contagion of familiar ill examples: "Evil communications (1 Cor. XV. 33.) corrupt good manners:" and I know not whether more persons have not owed their ruin and destruction to bad company, than to any other cause, or perhaps all other causes in the world. Whereas good company will constantly supply us with proper thoughts and sentiments, is ever starting some

• pleasing or profitable discourse, will entertain, improve, instruct, confirm the virtuous, and be sufficient to reform even the vicious. "No corrupt communication (Eph. IV. 29.) proceeds out of their mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Such is the company that we should most desire and frequent, to raise and improve our thoughts; and it will be a foretaste of the happiness of the next world, the society of heaven begun upon earth.

5. We should be curious too in the choice of the books we peruse, as another thing that will very much influence our way of thinking, and either greatly improve or greatly corrupt our notions and opinions. For what we peruse not only diverts and employs the mind for the present, but also leaveth a flavor and relish behind it. We chew the cud as it were and ruminate upon it afterwards; and the same thoughts frequently occur to us, the same notions still remain with us, though perhaps we have forgotten from what source they were borrowed. Reading is the food of the mind, and we should take care to supply it with wholesome provisions to nourish and strengthen it, and not with unclean meats to enervate and pollute it. For there are too many books in the world, and I wish they were not in too many hands and too well known to be particularly enumerated, which represent vice in the

the most pleasing dress, give us false ideas of love and honor, ridicule all notions of decency and virtue; and are read most by the young and unexperienced, where they are likely to make the deepest impression. But God be thanked, there is a number of good books as well as of bad, and to the treasures of ancient learning we may add the improvements of the moderns, so that we need never be at loss for proper entertainment and employment for our thoughts. And above all books there is the book of God, which as the apostle says (1 Tim. III. 15, 16, 17.) “is able to make us wise
“unto salvation, and is profitable for doctrine,
“for reproof, for correction, for instruction
“in righteousness, that the man of God may
“be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all
“good works,” and all good thoughts.

6. Lastly, other directions might be offered, but we will conclude with one more necessary than all others, which is to pray unto God for his holy spirit to purify our hearts and refine our imaginations. For speaking strictly (2 Cor. III. 5.) “we are not sufficient of ourselves to
“think any thing as of ourselves, but our
“sufficiency is of God.” Our souls are in the hands of God, and he can direct and turn them whithersoever he listeth; and though compulsion is not to be used to moral agents, yet the offers of grace are freely made to all who will accept it, and much more to all who desire it. Fervent devotion will itself enlarge

54 *On the government of the thoughts.*

and ennoble our thoughts, exalt our minds from mean and earthly objects to great and heavenly, and prepare our hearts for the reception of divine grace and inhabitation of the holy spirit. This was the method that "the man after God's own heart" took to become so, and he prayeth earnestly for the purification not only of "the words of his mouth," but likewise of "the meditations of his heart;" (Psal. XIX. 14.) "Let the words of my mouth, and "the meditation of my heart be acceptable in "thy sight, O Lord my strength and my redeemer:" and again in his penitential strain, (Psal. LI. 10.) "Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me." And for this purpose we cannot perhaps better address ourselves to the throne of grace than in the excellent language of our Church—
"Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy holy spirit, that we may perfectly love thee and worthily magnify thy holy name through Christ our Lord. Amen."

D I S.

DISSERTATION XIX.

On the government of the tongue.

SPEECH is one of the noblest faculties of our nature, and that which distinguisheth us mostly from the beasts and from one another. It is the bond of society; and according as it is used may be the instrument of doing great good or great hurt in the world. As St. James observes (III. 5, &c.) “the tongue is a little member, and” yet “boasteth great things. “No fountain can yield both salt water and “fresh:” but from the same tongue may proceed truth and falsehood, wisdom and folly, blessing and cursing. “Therewith bless we “God even the Father, and therewith curse “we men, which are made after the similitude “of God.” It may have the most salutary effects, or be of the most pernicious influence, as the same sun that sometimes animates life sometimes scatters death. It is therefore no wonder that in scripture there are so many precepts about the government of the tongue, so much depending upon it, and the matter being of such consequence to the peace and happiness of mankind.

Solomon may be our oracle in this respect, as well as in many others. No man hath made

juster observations upon human life, or given better directions for the conduct of it in all circumstances than he hath done, and especially in this particular. He speaketh of "keeping the tongue" in the same manner as he doth of "keeping the heart," and as a matter of equal importance. He saith (Prov. IV. 23.) "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Afterwards he saith (XIII. 3.) "He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life; but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction;" and again (XXI. 23.) "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles." The keeping of the tongue very properly follows the keeping of the heart; if the heart be kept under due regulation, the tongue will of course be so; for (Matt. XII. 34.) "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The conveniences too and inconveniences of keeping and not keeping watch and guard over them are in both cases much the same, and much the same rules and directions may serve for the government of the one as of the other.

The government of the tongue is indeed the easier task of the two. For wicked thoughts may arise in our minds whether we will or not. In the best cultivated gardens these weeds may sometimes be shooting up. But our words are more subject to controll, and we are under no necessity to speak, when it is contrary to our
own

own will and inclination. It is at any time in our power to be silent, and it is our duty to be silent rather than join in any improper or unprofitable discourse. We should, as St. James expresseth it, (I. 19.) "be swift to hear, slow to speak." Not that we should be ready to hear upon every occasion, that we should listen to every idle tale that is told us, that we should attend to all sorts of discourse from all sorts of persons. On the contrary it is our duty to stop our ears against all irreligious and immoral discourse, all slander and flattery, all "foolish talking and jesting which are not convenient;" for the very listening to them is encouraging them, and maketh us partakers of other men's follies and sins. Plutarch, one of the wisest and most learned among the heathen moralists and philosophers, hath written a whole essay (*περί ακουεῖς*) about *bearing*, of the qualifications which are requisite to it, and how it may be exercised to the best advantage. And a greater than Plutarch hath given us this counsel (Luke VIII. 18.) "Take heed how ye hear," and repeats it again and again, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

But what then? perhaps you will say,

Semper ego auditor tantum? nunquamne reponam?
JOVENAL.

What? shall I always hear, and ne'er reply?

No: we should not always be "slow to speak;" for there may be times and occasions, when it may

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be more proper to speak than to be silent, as when it is in our power to do any good, or prevent any evil, to instruct the ignorant, to comfort the distressed, to vindicate the truth and assert injured innocence; and in such cases readiness to speak is a virtue, and silence itself is a crime. Many a good man may find himself in the same circumstances with David, (Psal. XXXIX. 3, 4.) “I held my tongue, and spake nothing; I kept silence, yea even from good words, but it was pain and grief to me: My heart was hot within me, and while I was thus musing the fire kindled, and at the last I spake with my tongue.” The precept therefore is not positive and absolute, but we should rather understand it comparatively, that we should be “more ready to hear than to speak.” Neither will this hold always but generally, as there are few or no general rules but admit of some particular exceptions. It is not always, but for the most part it may be better to hear than to speak, “He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life;” but without doubt there is, as Solomon saith elsewhere, (Eccles. III. 7.) “a time to speak” as well as “a time to keep silence.” It is not designed to lessen the mutual intercourse and communication of friends, which is one of the greatest blessings of life, maketh our joys greater and our sorrows less; and the man who never opens himself to a friend, his head or heart, his ability or honesty is very much to be suspected. It is not designed to abridge the innocent

innocent freedoms of conversation, or to debar men from saying any thing that is good, any thing that is useful, or even any thing that is commonly entertaining, provided it be innocent. It is not the use of the tongue that is forbidden, but the abuse of it. It is not talking that is condemned, but much talking. And though great talkers may not be pleased to have their discourse abridged, and perhaps may think modest silence an effect of dulness, as they suppose forward speech to be an indication of ready wit; yet generally speaking, "He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life; but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction."

The conveniences on one side and inconveniences on the other are many and manifest; and if the former cannot persuade us to what is right, the latter may dissuade us from what is wrong.

Nature seemeth to recommend hearing rather than speaking, having given us two ears and only one tongue. And it is observed, that our ears are always open, but our tongue is inclosed, and guarded by two rows of teeth. This is an (1) argument that hath frequently been made use of by the philosophers; and certainly we should endeavor to conform to nature; what is natural is becoming. Nature usually

(1) Philosophi aiunt nobis am septo dentium obvallatam. datas aures duas, linguam Grotius in Jac. I. 19. and he hath unam; et aures patulas, linguam it particularly from Plutarch.

usually chooseth a mean in every thing. Extreme silence and extreme talkativeness are equally unnatural, and equally unfit for society, which requires something of both and not all of either.

In like manner it might be observed, that we can hear as soon as we are born, but it is some time before we are able to speak; which may instruct us, that we should always be hearers before we commence speakers. Certainly more is to be learned by hearing than by speaking; and perhaps in some cases we may profit more by attending to the discourse of ingenious company than by reading. "Faith cometh by hearing," says the apostle; (Rom. X. 17.) and may it not likewise be said, that *knowledge* cometh by hearing? If we would show ourselves, we should speak; if we would improve ourselves, we should hear; and whether we want more to be shown or to be improved, that we should consider with ourselves. We should esteem it a sad misfortune to be deaf, but great talkers contract a sort of voluntary deafness. It is not doing as they would be done by. They expect to be heard themselves, but will not give a fair hearing to others. They are so pleased and delighted to hear themselves talk, that they cannot attend to the discourse of the best and wisest about them; but still run on, and (Psal. LVIII. 5.) "like the deaf adder will not hearken to the voice of charmers charming never so wisely."

Besides

Besides the advantage of hearing others and improving by their discourse, you will obtain by it to be more favorably heard yourself. The company will more readily attend to one who doth not trouble them often. There is something more of novelty of it, and something more of expectation. Your words will have the greater weight, and make the deeper impression. You speak less, but are regarded more; as the nightingale that singeth but seldom is listened to more attentively, and silence is charmed. But commonly great talkers are as little attended to, as they attend to others. The end of speaking is to be heard with favor and attention, but a man always defeats that end by multiplying words without reason. All companies soon grow weary of him and avoid him; or if they cannot avoid him, regard him no more than "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." They may be forced to hear him, but they do not mind him; and very probably are thinking of something else all the time he is talking. All that he says leaveth no more traces behind it than (Wisd. V. 12.) "an arrow that parteth the air, which immediately cometh together again, so that a man cannot know where it went through."

Of the two extremes it is certainly safer to speak too little than too much, and infinitely fewer have suffered for the one than for the other. If your fault is in not speaking, that you may easily amend by speaking; but what

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is spoken amiss, cannot be unspoken again. I think it was Simonides who said, (2) that he had often repented of what he had spoken, but never of what he had not. Reserve in many cases is policy and prudence. It was a wise and good resolution of the royal psalmist, (Psal. XXXIX. 1.) "I said I will take heed to my ways that I sin not with my tongue, I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me." Our Saviour himself found it necessary many times to be cautious and reserved, and would not "throw his pearls before swine." The Word himself upon many occasions was sparing of his words, and (John II. 24, 25.) did not "commit himself" unto all men, "because he knew all men, and needed not that they should testify of man, for he knew what was in man." Great talkers often involve themselves in difficulties and dangers, which the more modest and reserved avoid. They are frequently obliged to explain, to evade, to excuse, to deny, to defend, to retract shamefully what they have said, or perhaps more shamefully to maintain it. And hence come feuds and animosities, hence come wars and fightings, (James III. 5.) "so great a matter a little fire kindleth." "A prating fool shall fall," as Solomon says, and repeats it twice. (Prov. X. 8, 10.) Many have

(2) Το Σιμωνιδιον, οτι λαλησας δι' εδικοις. Plutarch. περι αδολεσμων επιλογαις μισθιστοι, Γιωργιος χιαι prope finem.

(3) Dictum

have been undone for speaking, but seldom or never any man for holding his tongue. "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles."

As it is safer for yourself to speak too little than too much, so likewise is it generally more obliging to others. The greatest compliment that you can pay to some people is to sit still and give them the hearing. Nothing that you can offer will be half so agreeable as your attention. It sheweth something of modesty and deference; and all persons, the weakest as well as the wisest, love to be thought considerable, and are never displeased by your submitting to them. Much talking is offensive to others, as well as dangerous to yourself. It is an infringement upon the liberty of the company; and monopolies are to be allowed in no kind of commerce, in conversation no more than in trade. In company we meet all as in a consort; every one is to bear his part; and who can endure that one noisy instrument should drown the harmony of all the rest? It is a strange want of respect to your superiors; it is arrogance to your equals; and to your inferiors it is a species of cruelty not unlike that which was used to the slaves of old, who had their ears bored for a token of servitude. To all sorts of people there is surely nothing more disagreeable, more tedious, more mortifying, than being obliged to sit still and hear an eternal talker with vast profusion of words
and

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and yet little sense or meaning. The Church of Rome hath not invented a worse among all her penances. And when several of the same character meet together (as sometimes it happens that they do meet together) what is there but a confusion of tongues and a Babel?

In all likelihood too you will obtain the character of wisdom sooner for what you do not say than for what you do. The wisest men are never the greatest talkers; as the deepest rivers run on silently and undisturbed, while the shallowest brooks with every little sudden rain overflow. If you have wisdom, your reserve will not lessen it, and if you have not, your silence will best conceal the defect. The man of few words hath commonly the good luck to be reputed wise, and often really is so. And the wisest of men hath observed the same thing long ago; (Prov. XVII. 27, 28.)
“ He that hath knowlege spareth his words :
“ Even a fool when he holdeth his peace is
“ counted wise, and he that shutteth his lips
“ is esteemed a man of understanding.” Men forfeit the character of wisdom by nothing sooner than by talking too much. They do it to distinguish themselves and to be thought wiser than their neighbours; but for that very reason they are thought not so wise. It exposeth folly, and causeth it to appear greater; it debaseth wisdom, and maketh it appear less, than it is in reality. “ A fool’s voice is known
“ by multitude of words,” saith the preacher.
(Eccles.)

(Ecclef. V. 3.) A man may talk a great deal, and yet say little or nothing. Words are but as wind, and the vessel always soundeth most when it is empty. (Ecclus XXI. 26.) "The heart of fools is in their mouth, but the mouth of the wise is in their heart."

They will not only be thought wise but also secret, and there are few qualities in life more valuable or more useful than secrecy. Secrecy is to the mind like cloathing to the body, and covers our nakedness which is as uncomely in the one as in the other. Secrecy procures friendship and confidence, and invites and engages men to open and communicate themselves to us. The secret man is as it were a *Confessor* to his friends, and is trusted and respected accordingly. If men forfeit the character of secrecy, they forfeit with it all the benefits and pleasures of friendship. It is no wonder that they reveal another's secrets, for they cannot conceal their own. It is no wonder that they tell all they know, for they often tell more than they know, and supply the want of truth with invention. "A tale-bearer revealeth secrets," saith Solomon: (Prov. XI. 13.) and can such a man have a friend, or be a friend? Who would open his heart to one, who is perpetually talking without reserve, without discretion? Who would put good wine into a vessel that is continually running out? If you want to have any thing published, you need only impart it to such persons as a

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secret. In this they may be proper tools and instruments, and in nothing else are they fit to be trusted.

In most cases the fewest words are best. If what you say is bad, it cannot be too short; and if it is good, the brevity will make it remembered with the greater pleasure. (3) A word *to* the wise is enough; so likewise is a word *from* the wise; and those sayings have usually the best effect and do the most execution, which like daggers are sharp and short, the words few, but the sense complete. Lycurgus therefore trained up the Spartan youth to speak apothegms, to return short and pertinent answers, what from them we still call the Laconic way of speaking. And the writings which remain of the wisest man that ever lived consist chiefly of short sayings and proverbs. The more you speak, the less probably you will speak to the purpose. If what you say is bad, prolixity will make it worse, will make it indeed intolerable; and if it is good, still there is as much difference between a loose and a close way of speaking as between gold in the leaf and gold in the wedge. It is impossible for the wisest man to be talking always, and always well. There must be time for thought and recollection. A few bad things will disparage many good one: and the former will be remembered to his disgrace, when the latter are

(3) *Dictum sapienti sat est.* Ter.

(4) *Dicit*

are forgotten. For people (4) relate and remember sooner what they deride, than what they approve; and it is in the current of discourse as in the current of a river, things of weight and moment sink, while straws and feathers swim.

There is something even of religion in silence. The royal preacher giveth these directions about religious worship; (Ecclef. V. 1, 2.) "Be more ready to hear than to give
" the sacrifice of fools; Be not rash with thy
" mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to
" utter any thing before God, for God is in
" heaven and thou upon earth, therefore let
" thy words be few." Our Saviour himself commands us in our prayers "not to use vain
" repetitions" (Matt. VI. 7.) like those who
" think they shall be heard for their much speaking:" and the prayer which he hath taught us is as excellent for its brevity as for its fullness. St. John upon a certain occasion (Rev. VIII. 1.) says that "there was silence in
" heaven." The very Heathens had their mysterious rites and ceremonies, which were performed with solemn silence; and may it not also be said, that the best of some modern sectaries are their *silent meetings*? And "O
" that they would altogether hold their peace," to speak in the language of Job, (XIII. 5.)
" and

(4) Dicit enim citius meminitque libentius illud
Quod quis deridet quam quod probat.

Hor.

“ and it should be their wisdom.” The wisest and the best thing, that some public teachers as well as public speakers could do, would be to lay their hands on their lips and be silent. “ In the multitude of words,” as Solomon observes, (Prov. X. 19.) “ there wanteth not “ sin.” Great talkers must have some subject for discourse, be it proper or improper, good or bad, right or wrong, true or false, in season or out of season ; vanity, self-conceit, impertinence, curiosity, insincerity, flattery, detraction, slander are the common ingredients ; and rather than be silent we have known men supply the want of something to say with oaths and curses, “ speak evil of dignities” (Jude 8.) and blaspheme even God and religion. So true it is, that “ the tongue,” the tongue of such men especially, (James III. 8, 6.) “ is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison : The tongue “ is a fire, a world of iniquity ; so is the “ tongue amongst our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire “ the course of nature, and it is set on fire “ of hell.”

In short, the man who governs his tongue the scripture hath dignified with the title of a “ perfect man ;” and he who can command himself in this instance can equally command himself in all. (James III. 2.) “ If any man “ offend not in word, the same is a perfect “ man, and able also to bridle the whole body.” But woe to that man who multiplies words to
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no purpose. Our Saviour and Judge hath declared, that "every idle word that men speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment;" (Matt. XII. 36.) and therefore by multiplying idle words we magnify our account, and (Rom. II. 5.) "treasure up wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."

So necessary it is to govern this unruly member; and much the same rules and directions, which are given for the government of the heart, may serve also for the government of the tongue.

The thought of God's continual presence and inspection over us is sufficient to check and restrain all idle and unprofitable, and much more all filthy and corrupt communication. We are naturally cautious of what we say before our earthly superiors; and is not greater respect and deference due to the great majesty of heaven, "the king of kings and lord of lords?" Every man may truly say with the good psalmist, (Psal. CXXXIX. 4.) "There is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether;" and wouldst thou then (Psal. XXXIV. 12, &c.) "love life and see good days, keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile; for the eyes of the Lord are over all, and his ears are open unto all."

You must also take due care of your health, and command your passions, if you would be

master of yourself, and have the entire command of your words. For men in sickness or pain are too apt to say cross and peevish things, and men in a passion scarce know what they say, and often utter in their haste what they find reason to repent of afterwards at leisure. You know what was the punishment of Moses, (Psal. CVI. 33.) "because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips." St. Paul, upon great provocation, being smitten contrary to the law, spake something disrespectfully to the high-priest, for which being reproved by the standers by, he presently recollected himself, and acknowledged his error; (Acts XXIII. 5.) "I wist not, brethren, that he was the high-priest; for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." And if saints are liable to these transgressions, how much more ought sinners to beware lest they offend with their tongue?

You should moreover be diligent and active in the business or station whereunto it hath pleased God to call you; for an idle life produceth idle discourse at best. "Whatsoever" therefore (Eccles. IX. 10.) "thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Men as well as women, when they neglect their proper calling, (1 Tim. V. 13.) "learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tatlers also and busy bodies, speaking things which they ought not."

Nothing will improve you more, and qualify you better for conversation, than the keeping of good company, and the reading of good books. (Prov. XV. 2.) "the tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright, but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness." Plutarch adviseth you, if you are addicted to garrulity, to accustom yourself to writing, and to keep company with your superiors, that so you may learn modesty and silence. Accustom yourself to a proper and becoming reserve, use yourself to speak to the purpose, or not to speak at all; for use is the mother of all habits. Besides never interrupt another while he is speaking. It is ill manners, and you cannot then plead the necessity of keeping up the conversation. This is the advice of the wise son of Sirach, (Ecclus XI. 8.) "Answer not before thou hast heard the cause, neither interrupt men in the midst of their talk." Think also before you speak (5) *what* you are going to say, and to *whom* you are going to say it. For certainly if men thought more they would talk less, remembering that (Prov. XVII. 21.) "death and life are in the power of the tongue."

Above all pray to God in the words of the royal psalmist (Psalm CXXI. 3.) "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips:" (XIX. 14.) "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord my strength and my redeemer."

(5) *Quid de quoque viro et cui dicas sæpe caveto.* Hor.

master of yourself, and have the entire command of your words. For men in sickness or pain are too apt to say cross and peevish things; and men in a passion scarce know what they say, and often utter in their haste what they find reason to repent of afterwards at leisure. You know what was the punishment of Moses, (Psal. CVI. 33.) "because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips." St. Paul, upon great provocation, being smitten contrary to the law, spake something disrespectfully to the high-priest, for which being reproved by the standers by, he presently recollected himself, and acknowledged his error; (Acts XXIII. 5.) "I wist not, brethren, that he was the high-priest; for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." And if saints are liable to these transgressions, how much more ought sinners to beware lest they offend with their tongue?

You should moreover be diligent and active in the business or station whereunto it hath pleased God to call you; for an idle life produceth idle discourse at best. "Whatsoever" therefore (Eccles. IX. 10.) "thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Men as well as women, when they neglect their proper calling, (1 Tim. V. 13.) "learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busy bodies, speaking things which they ought not."

Nothing will improve you more, and qualify you better for conversation, than the keeping of good company, and the reading of good books. (Prov. XV. 2.) "the tongue of the
" wise useth knowlege aright, but the mouth
" of fools poureth out foolishness." Plutarch adviseth you, if you are addicted to garrulity, to accustom yourself to writing, and to keep company with your superiors, that so you may learn modesty and silence. Accustom yourself to a proper and becoming reserve, use yourself to speak to the purpose, or not to speak at all; for use is the mother of all habits. Besides never interrupt another while he is speaking. It is ill manners, and you cannot then plead the necessity of keeping up the conversation. This is the advice of the wise son of Sirach, (Ecclus XI. 8.) "Answer not before thou
" hast heard the cause, neither interrupt men
" in the midst of their talk." Think also before you speak, (5) *what* you are going to say, and to *whom* you are going to say it. For certainly if men thought more they would talk less, remembering that (Prov. XVIII. 21.) "death
" and life are in the power of the tongue."

Above all pray to God in the words of the royal psalmist (Psalm CXXI. 3.) "Set a watch,
" O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the
" door of my lips:" (XIX. 14.) "Let the
" words of my mouth and the meditation of
" my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord
" my strength and my redeemer."

(5) *Quid de quoque viro et cui dicas sapere caveto.* Hor.

DISSERTATION XX.

Men the authors of their own misery or happiness.

AS almighty God is infinitely happy himself, so he made all his creatures to partake of happiness in the different degrees and proportions which their different natures and capacities will admit: and such a being as God cannot be supposed to have made them for any other end or with any other design. Some creatures seem to be formed only for a temporary being in this world, and in this world therefore they must enjoy all the good of which they are capable. Others are designed for an eternal duration in a future state, and therefore there is no taking a measure of their happiness by their present condition, the next world must also be taken into the account; and if upon the whole the misery of any creature is an overbalance to his happiness, it must be owing entirely to the defection and depravity of that creature, and not any want of goodness in the creator.

If then all creatures are formed to partake of happiness, they must have some means of attaining this end; it must be placed within the possibility of their reach; there can be no cherubim

cherubim and flaming swords to guard it from them. Accordingly brutes are led to what is their good by instinct, as men have reason to conduct them to their good. And probably brutes, having their whole existence here, have here likewise their whole happiness; but men, being only on their passage to their heavenly country, must not hope to meet with all the accommodations upon the road which they may expect at home. It is probable too that we are here in a state of degradation, that mankind are not so happy now as they were originally created; probable I say from the appearances of things, and certain from revelation. Not but even this stage of existence exhibits more good than evil; and men, though they have continued ever so long in the world, yet seldom grow weary of it, and (1) retire satisfied from life like a guest from a full meal. The love of life with all its infirmities is still natural to us; few persons are for shifting the scene they know not for what and they know not where. In this melancholy climate there is hardly one in ten thousand who layeth violent hands upon himself, and instances of self-murder are more frequent in this country than in any other.

In life then we may conclude, that there is more good than evil, more pleasure than pain, more

(1) ——— exacto contentus tempore vitæ
Cedat uti conviva satur ———

Hor.

(2) ——— nec

more happiness than misery; and that men enjoy not more than they do is greatly their own fault in seeking happiness where it is not to be found, and neglecting where it is. Instinct is often a more steady principle of action in brutes, than reason in men. Brutes seldom or never deviate from the path of nature; they are constantly urged on in the same track by a sort of necessity without turning aside to the right-hand or to the left; they are, at least in many instances they are, mere pieces of animal machinery, if I may so speak, moving by invisible springs: whereas men are left more to themselves and their own conduct; they are rational moral agents, indued with a liberty of choosing and refusing; they may and therefore they often do deviate from nature and from happiness. Happiness indeed they always desire, but they often mistake it, pursue the shadow instead of the substance, hunt after it in things without, and little consider that it is seated more within. The wise man had a very right apprehension of the matter, when he said, (Prov. XIV. 14.) "the backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways, and a good man shall be satisfied from himself;" in which words is implied this great and important truth, that every man is the author of his own misery or happiness. His good or bad condition depends not so much upon his outward circumstances, as upon his mind, his good or bad behaviour. His guilt will be its own punishment, his goodness its own reward.

I. "The

I. "The backslider in heart shall be filled
"with his own ways." It is in vain to pretend to dissuade men from any thing to which they are strongly inclined, unless you can show that it is manifestly to their detriment and disadvantage: and it is well if you can dissuade them from it even then. A life of sin is upon every account and in every point of view the greatest folly imaginable; but yet it is not general harangues that will divert men from such a course of life. If we would effectually persuade them to renounce and forsake it, we must prove to them that it is directly contrary to their interest, and in all probability will render them miserable in this world as well as in that which is to come. There are few or none, I believe, who commit sin for the sake of sin; or are wicked merely out of love to wickedness. They usually propose to themselves some pleasure and satisfaction; something under the appearance of good inflames their desires; and this is the common artifice whereby sin decoys and ensnares them; pleasure is the bait, and they see not that the hook beneath is destruction. The thing is therefore to convince men, that the event will by no means answer their expectation, that the good which they promise themselves will prove their greatest evil, that though the pleasures of sin may be sweet as honey at first, yet (Prov. XX. 17.) "afterwards their mouth shall be
"filled with gravel," and the bitter will remain

main when the sweet is gone, and imaginary transient pleasure conclude in real lasting pain. "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways." His own wickedness will chastise him, his guilt will be its own punishment several ways; but the rest perhaps are reducible to these, which are most worthy of our notice and observation.

1. The natural effects and consequences of some sins are a punishment to the sinner; as surely as by taking up fire in his hand he will be burned. For instance who seeth not that avarice is its own punishment, starving in the midst of plenty, surrounded with all the cares and troubles of riches yet tasting none of the comforts, denying the conveniences and grudging even the necessities of life, wanting for very fear of want, and suffering more by imaginary poverty than others do by real? inso-much that it is grown familiar in our language to use *covetous* and *miserable* as synonymous terms; and as if avarice was misery itself, we call an avaricious man *a miser*.

To avoid this, if you should run into the contrary extreme, you will find that extravagance likewise is its own punishment, that it undermines the very ground upon which it standeth, and layeth a train as it were to blow itself up; that it cannot be supported without dishonesty, and with all your dishonesty cannot be supported long; and what a terrible change of the scene is it from a life of superfluity to
a life

a life of indigence? and how will you condemn yourself for having wasted and consumed so much precious treasure; and wish, but wish in vain, that any part of it was your own again?

Is not the drunkard immediately punished by deprivation of his senses and transformation of the man into a beast? and so lieth in a fever, dozing out the fumes of liquor till his senses return and he cometh to himself again, and more than payeth with sickness in the morning for the debauch of the night before. This is his immediate punishment, but neither is this all his punishment; for commonly the dropsy or gout or some such terrible distemper attacks him; and though he may plead for drinking to keep up his spirits, yet it will certainly depress them; and the more he shall drink, the more he will want to drink, and in time will burn up his very vitals, and commit self-murder as much as if he was to poison himself, only his is a slower sort of poison.

Is not the whoremonger equally punished in body and mind and estate? With what expense are his vicious amours usually attended, and how do they impoverish and ruin his estate? how do they debase his understanding, and impair all the parts and faculties of his mind? how do they weaken and destroy his constitution, and entail aches and rottenness on his bones? As Solomon describes him, (Prov. VII. 22, 23.) “ He goeth after a futtle harlot, as
“ an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to
“ the

“ the correction of the stocks ; till a dart strike
“ through his liver, as a bird hasteth to the
“ snare, and knoweth not that it is for his
“ life.”

The punishment of habitual lying is, that you will never be believed though you speak the truth. The punishment of idleness is, that it will cloath you with rags, and bring you to shame and infamy. Every passion in excess is its own punishment. The angry man revengeth the faults of others upon himself. The envious man maketh another's happiness the cause of his own misery. In like manner every vicious passion, every vicious action almost, will hurt your fortune or impair your health, or blast your reputation, or some way or other be its own avenger, though there was to be none other.

2. Where the sins of men are not the immediate efficient cause, yet they are often the occasion of their misfortunes. In many cases where the punishment does not follow upon the offense in the course of nature, yet it is often inflicted in the course of law ; and though a man may possibly escape the natural effects and consequences of his sins, yet there are penal statutes in every society, so that he may still be no gainer, but contrariwise a great sufferer. And where a wicked man is not so wicked as to become obnoxious to the laws of his country, yet he may be odious and hated by the generality of mankind, and divine providence

dence may suffer or even order all events to work together for evil to him who doeth evil. An estate gotten by extortion and injustice often proveth the occasion of a man's ruin. You shall very rarely know it to prosper, and commonly you may observe a visible curse to attend the possessor and the possession. If you will revolve in your minds the former passages of your lives, you will trace most of your misfortunes to have been originally owing some way or other to your own misconduct. At least it is certain, that if there had never been any sin in the world, there had never been any trouble. The one was plainly the occasion of the other. If man had continued innocent, he had never died, and the only remove and change of his condition had been from paradise to heaven.

3. Men sometimes by their sins draw down similar judgments upon their own heads, and in the same manner wherein they offend they are punished. Mankind take delight in this sort of retribution, and God is often pleased so to dispose and order his judgments; (2) nor indeed is any law more just, than that offenders should be paid in the same coin, and as they have done unto others, so it should be requited unto them again. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;" (Matt. V. 38.) so far was the law of retaliation carried among the Jews:

(2) —nec lex est justior ulla, &c. Ovid.

(3) Tacit.

Jews: and though all people are not bound to follow the Jewish laws, yet this is such a law of God and universal reason, that perhaps a better cannot be devised for the use and benefit of all nations. It was also a law before that, (Gen. IX. 6.) and hath continued after it, that whoso killeth another shall be killed himself, "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Adonibezeck (Judges I.) cut off the thumbs and great toes of threescore and ten kings, and therefore it was a just judgment upon him, that the Israelites "cut off his thumbs and his great toes." It is the greatest stain in David's character, that he committed adultery with the wife of Uriah, and afterwards ordered the injured husband to be slain with the sword; and therefore the prophet threatens him (2 Sam. XII. 10, 11.) that "the sword should never depart from his house," and "his neighbour should take his wives, and lie with them in the sight of the sun," which was accordingly fulfilled by his rebellious son Absalom in the sight of all Israel. They who had caused Daniel to be put into the den of lions, (Dan. VI.) were themselves also cast into the den of lions, and died the same cruel death which they had devised for him. It would be endless to produce so many instances as might be cited out of history to show that men's sins are not only the occasion of their punishment, but of their being punished in the very same manner wherein they had offended.

So just and true is our Saviour's assertion; (Matt. VII. 2.) even with regard to this life, that "with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

4. Though the sinner should escape all other punishment, yet he cannot escape the horrors and agonies of his own guilty mind. All men have natural faculties to discern and distinguish between good and evil, what they ought to do and what to avoid: and when they act according to the judgment of their own mind, their conscience acquits them; when they act contrary to it, the same conscience condemns them. And where can be the pleasure and satisfaction, when their passions are at war with their reason, when they are uneasy to themselves, when they are ashamed of themselves, when they are sensible that they have not deserved well of men, and have the greatest reason to dread the impending judgments of God? With what shame and confusion must Adam have been overwhelmed (Gen. III.) when he was "afraid and hid himself from the presence of the Lord God?" With what fears and terrors must Cain have been distracted, (Gen. IV. 13, 14.) when he said, "My punishment is greater than I can bear, and it shall come to pass that every one that findeth me shall slay me?" With what remorse and despair must Judas have been tortured, when he brought again the thirty pieces of silver (Matt. XXVII.

8.) "and went and hanged himself?" Conscience is often compared to a judge, and it is so faithful a judge, that neither pleasure can charm it, nor business divert it, neither eloquence can persuade, nor cunning deceive, nor wealth corrupt, nor power overawe it, to give an unjust sentence. It judgeth always according to its best knowledge and information, it is inflexible and severe to the greatest as to the meanest; and though all the world should applaud, yet conscience will not therefore the less condemn. How was Herod terrified at the fame of Jesus, and imagined in his fright and confusion, (Mark VI. 14.) "that John the Baptist," whom he had unjustly beheaded, "was risen from the dead?" As "Paul" reasoned of righteousness, temperance and "judgment to come," (Acts XXIV. 25.) how did the guilty Felix "tremble," a great governor tremble at the voice of a poor prisoner? All the power and splendor of the Roman empire could not hinder (3.) Tiberius from discovering the torments and agonies of mind under which he labored; and how improper soever it might be to confess, yet he could not help confessing, that he knew neither what to say or not to say, and was as miserable almost as the Gods could make him. A guilty conscience, though possibly it may be lulled asleep at other times, yet is sure to awaken in the day of judgment when he brought.

11VXX (3) Tacit. Annals Lib. 6. Cap. 6. (4) Nunquam

day of affliction, and on a bed of sickness, and at the hour of death. It will torment you most, when you want most to be comforted: and can any thing be more miserable, than when our spirit which should support us, itself sinketh under us? (Prov. XVIII. 14.) "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?"

5. A guilty mind will be the source of the sinner's misery in the next world, as well as embitter all his enjoyments in this. Death, that will deliver you from all the other troubles of life, cannot yet deliver you from the stings of a guilty conscience. All those evils, which affect the body, die with the body; but the qualities and affections of the soul survive with the soul itself. The mind is properly the man; and that is changed no more by putting off the body, than you are changed by putting off your cloaths. The guilt therefore that you contract will not only be a stain in this life, but will remain with you in the other. It is not the change of place and condition that will change the temper and disposition of the soul. The place without doubt contributes much to happiness or misery, and no places are more different than heaven and hell: but yet I say it is not the place alone but the mind chiefly that constitutes happiness or misery, so that if a wicked man was to be in heaven, he could receive little pleasure and satisfaction there. There is nothing to fit his taste, or

suit his inclination, and in the midst of happiness itself he would still be miserable. And if a guilty mind will spoil happiness in the place of happiness, much more will it aggravate misery in the place of misery. A guilty mind is not only the occasion of the punishment of the damned, but is also part of their punishment itself. The remembrance of their sins, the consideration of what brought them there, sorrow for the past, dread of the future, remorse horror and despair are the principal ingredients of their misery: (Wisd. V. 3, &c.) "And
 " they repenting and groaning for anguish of
 " spirit shall say within themselves, We wearied
 " ourselves in the way of wickedness and
 " destruction, yea we have gone through deserts
 " where there lay no way, but as for the
 " way of the Lord we have not known it.
 " What hath pride profited us, or what good
 " have riches with our vaunting brought us?
 " All these things are passed away, and we are
 " consumed in our own wickedness."

You see by these instances how mens wickedness corrects them, and their guilt is its own punishment. Agreeable to which also is the denunciation of the prophet, (Jer. II. 19.)
 " Thine own wickedness shall correct thee,
 " and thy backslidings shall reprove thee; know
 " therefore and see, that it is an evil thing
 " and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord
 " thy God, and that my fear is not in thee
 " saith the Lord God of hosts." And can there

there be a more powerful argument to dehort and dissuade you from a sinful course of life, which will otherwise be your destruction? If the rewards of virtue will not engage you to be virtuous, yet surely the punishment of sinners will deter you from sin. If the hopes of happiness will not incline you to what is good, yet surely the fear of misery will make you flee from what is evil. The divine, as well as human, laws have penalties annexed to the observance of them; but it is the excellence of the divine laws, that they in great measure execute themselves. The penalty follows upon the offense without the formalities of a trial; and you will find in the event, that you have not sinned more against God than against yourself. Moral and natural evil are more nearly allied than perhaps you imagin; and if guilt is generally its own punishment in this world, much more and more certainly it is in the world to come. If we perceive that vengeance usually pursues sinners, in our present short and imperfect view of things; much more will appear the close connection between sin and punishment, and the exact proportion of the one to the other, when we arrive at a more perfect state, and have a fuller and clearer comprehension of the divine dispensations from the beginning to the end. The sinner may rejoice in his own ways, and triumph in the pride and vanity of his heart: but he may depend upon it, that his pain will far exceed his pleasure.

sure even in this life; and what he suffers here is only a foretaste and earnest of what he must expect hereafter. As vice is usually its own punishment, so virtue is generally and in the ordinary course of human affairs its own reward. The natural effects and consequences of some virtues are themselves a reward to the virtuous: And where mens virtues are not the immediate efficient cause, yet they are often the occasion of their reputation and success in the world. Men sometimes by their virtues draw down similar blessings upon their own heads, and the good which they do to others is repaid to them again. But though they should be disappointed of all other rewards, yet they cannot be deprived of the testimony and applause of a good conscience: And a good conscience will be the source of their happiness in the next world, as well as double all their pleasures and enjoyments in this. Which leadeth us very properly to our second general head.

II. "A good man shall be satisfied from himself." No considerations whatever are more useful or more affecting than those concerning happiness, where it may be found, and how it may be attained. Not that we must expect any such thing as perfect happiness here below, and neither do we speak of it in the strict and proper sense of the word, but only according to the common acceptation; and all that we would be understood to assert is, that happiness,

happiness, such as our present imperfect state will allow, ariseth chiefly from within, and this inward happiness can be preserved and acquired only by virtue and goodness. This is self-satisfaction, and this is its true source and origin.

As to our first inquiry *where happiness may be found*, it is seated principally in the mind, it ariseth chiefly from within. To constitute happiness three things are in some measure requisite, an easy fortune, a healthy body, and a cheerful mind. But though these are all requisite to constitute happiness, yet they are not requisite all in an equal degree. Our estate and fortune are not of such immediate relation to us as our bodies, nor yet are our bodies ourselves; the mind is at least the principal part of the composition, and consequently the principal part also of our happiness must be founded in it and depend upon it. Happiness, as well as charity, begins at home; and to apply the words of Moses (Deut. XXX. 14.) there is no need "to go up into heaven" to fetch it from thence, there is no need to go "beyond the sea to bring it" from thence, but it is "very nigh unto us in our mouth and in our heart." If it is not seated chiefly in the mind, where else is it seated?

Will *riches* make any one easy and happy? No man can properly be said to be rich, who is not contented; and contentment is seated in the mind. The riches of the mind only can

make a man easy and happy. All other wealth may make him anxious, may make him covetous, may make him miserable, and not only may but very frequently doth. (Eccles. V. 10.)

“He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increase, this is vapity.”

Will *power* bid fairer for happiness? or rather do you not know many a private man happier than a king? As power increaseth, cares increase with it; and a crown often proveth in effect a crown of thorns. The best command is the command over one's self; (Prov. XVI. 32.) “he that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city:” nor indeed is that man fit or able to govern others, who cannot govern himself; (Prov. XXV. 28.) “he that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls.”

Our outward circumstances of wealth and power will not constitute happiness, will things which more immediately belong to us, such as *health* and *strength* of *body*? Strength of body without mind to govern is brutal; and many brutes surpass men in strength and agility and long life. And for health there is little enjoyment in it without a cheerful mind. It is a much more eligible state to have a weakly constitution with good spirits than a robust one without. Few persons are more miserable than those, who though they are well, yet are always

fancying;

fancying themselves ill, and suffer as much by imaginary evils as by real.

Will sensual delights and gratifications have any better effect? These by many are thought to be happiness itself; but what is it that giveth us the taste and relish of them? If the mind is inattentive or indisposed, there is no satisfaction or pleasure in them; and if they were tasted in the highest possible degree, still the happiness of an intellectual rational creature must be something of a different nature, something superior and nobler than sensual pleasure. Solomon had fully experienced all sensual pleasures and gratifications; (Eccles. II. 4. &c.) he "builded," he "planted," he "gave himself unto wine," he "got him men-singers" and women-singers with musical instruments of all sorts; whatsoever his eyes desired he kept not from them, he withheld not his heart from any joy. And besides "his wisdom remained with him;" he had a nicer taste and superior understanding to enjoy all these pleasures in a more elegant and refined manner than any other of the sons of men can pretend to do; and yet after all you know it was his conclusion, that sensual pleasure was not only "vanity" but "vexation of spirit."

You see there can be no happiness without the mind; let us now see what happiness the mind will administer. I believe there are no such rigid Stoics now as to affirm that other things will not at all contribute to happiness; but

but still the mind is the agent, and other things are the only instruments.

It is the mind that perceives and distinguishes; it is not the eye that seeth or the ear that heareth; but the mind is the man, or as we may express it, the god within us that is all in all. It is the mind chiefly that differenceth men one from another, and maketh inferiours often wiser and better and happier than their superiours. A chearful mind is the pleasure of prosperity and the comfort of adversity, the greatest preservative of health, and the best medicin in sickness, and what in the language of Cicero we may call *vita utilis*, the life of life itself.

It is the mind that administers all the pleasure which ariseth from learning and knowledge, from the perception of present good, the remembrance of past, and the hope of future. All the pleasures of imagination, of reflection, of memory, of judgment, of understanding, all spring and flow from this fountain. Philosophy, poetry, history, those fine flights of fancy, that clear vein of reasoning, that strong torrent of eloquence, all arts, all sciences are the product of the mind, and are not only the most useful but the most delightful employments of the life of man. Un taught, unlettered we can see but little by ourselves, but learning opens to us another world, that is always new and entertaining. The principal excellence of man's nature is that he is made a
reasonable

reasonable creature, and the exercise and improvement of that reason must therefore be his principal happiness.

It is the mind that administers all the pleasure which ariseth from virtue and religion, virtue and religion being seated there, and thence diffused and exerted into action. Our virtue, like our blood, must circulate from the heart, or otherwise it is no virtue. Hypocrisy is as odious as sincere piety is amiable; and they who are like God in goodness, cannot fail of being upon the whole like him also in happiness.

All other pleasures soon cloy and satiate, and the more they are tasted the more they pall upon the appetite; but the pleasures of the mind continually improve upon us, and the more they are enjoyed the more they are desired. All other pleasures with the means and occasions of them may be ravished from us by outward force and violence; but the pleasures of the mind are properly our own, and nothing can separate us from ourselves. All other pleasures subsist only at certain times, and in certain places, and with certain persons; but the pleasures of the mind depend neither upon time nor place, and (4) a wise man is never less alone than when alone. All other pleasures are common to brutes, and what they perhaps enjoy as much or more; but the pleasures of the mind

(4) *Nunquam minus solus quam cum solus.* Cicero.

(5) ——— Hæret

mind not only distinguish us from the brute creation, but also make us "partakers of the divine nature." All other pleasures die before us or die with us; but the pleasures of the mind are like the mind itself immortal, are not only pleasures for a season, but pleasures for evermore.

Let this suffice for an answer to our first inquiry, *where happiness may be found*; our second inquiry is *how it may be attained*. And having attempted to prove that happiness ariseth chiefly from within, we shall now endeavor to show that this inward happiness can be preserved and acquired only by virtue and goodness. And much the same method of proof will serve in this case as in the former, for as there can be no happiness without the mind, and the mind will greatly contribute to happiness; so there can be none of this inward happiness without virtue and goodness, and virtue and goodness will greatly contribute to this inward happiness.

Guilt and uneasiness are inseparable companions; and what "God hath" thus "joined together, let not men" pretend to "put asunder." Man, after he had contracted guilt, was an uneasy being even in paradise; he was ashamed "and hid himself from the presence of the Lord God," whom he used before to meet with pleasure. *Before* you commit a sin, do you not usually find some difficulty in contriving it, are you not anxious and

and trembling lest your design should be perceived, doth not your mind frequently misgive you, and your own reason tell you that you ought to refrain? *When* you commit a sin, still doth not your own conscience upbraid you, are you not jealous and afraid lest any eye should see you, and do you not find much more disappointment in it than satisfaction? And *after* you have committed a sin, how doth your mind reproach and condemn you for having acted against your own sense and conviction, how fearful are you of a discovery, and how ashamed when discovered, how dispirited are you often at the remembrance of your sins, especially in a day of trouble or sickness, and how sensible are you that you have reason to dread contempt from men here and punishment from God hereafter? So grievous are the wounds of conscience; and wherever we go, the deadly arrow is (5) fixed in our side. In such cases if any pretend serenity, it is only pretence; their conscience all the while giveth them the lie; they may disguise it in public, but they feel it in private; they may wear smiles upon the face, but depend upon it there is anguish at the heart. God who knoweth the heart hath declared by the prophet, (Isa. LVII. 20, 21.) "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters

(5) — *Hæret lateri lethalis arundo.* Virgil.

(6) Horace.

"waters cast up mire and dirt; there is no peace, saith my God to the wicked."

Reason, scripture, experience, all evince that there can be none of this inward happiness, no peace and satisfaction of mind without virtue and goodness; it will as evidently appear that virtue and goodness will greatly contribute to this inward happiness, to the peace and satisfaction of the mind. We are creatures, indued with a moral nature and moral faculties of perception and of action. Our palate doth not distinguish more between sweet and bitter, than this moral sense this moral taste doth between virtue and vice; and when our actions agree with our sentiments, then all is harmony peace and satisfaction within; when they disagree, then all is discord uneasiness and dissatisfaction. Virtue husheth and layeth asleep all the rougher passions; so that there shall be no wicked ambition, no sinful anger, no envy, no malice, no inordinate affections, to shake and disturb our repose; and it will not only lay asleep all the rougher passions, but will inspire us with all pleasing sentiments, a spirit of contentment, resignation to the divine will, cheerfulness, love, freedom, generosity, beneficence and benevolence to the whole creation. O the peace and serenity, O the satisfaction and heavenly-mindedness which he enjoys, who is a friend to every body, and to whom therefore generally every body is a friend! Every virtue will contribute one way or other

to our peace and satisfaction. Faith, hope, and charity are each of them the means and instruments of happiness here as well as hereafter. What joy and comfort is there in believing, that we have an almighty preserver and protector, that nothing happens to us but what infinite wisdom seeth best for us, that (John III. 17.) "God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved?" What is life without hope but a scene of gloominess and darkness? The finest prospect to the eye is not half so delightful as hope to the mind. And what hopes are so rational, so glorious as those of a good Christian, the hopes of divine favor in this world, the hopes of divine happiness in the world to come! What pleasure and satisfaction do acts of charity diffuse over the heart? Doing good to others is really doing good to ourselves. There is a pleasure surely in being obliged, but to a generous mind there is an infinitely greater in obliging. (Acts XX. 35.) "It is more blessed to give than to receive." What the wise man therefore says of religion (Prov. III. 15, &c.) is very true, that "all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her: Length of days is in her right-hand, and in her left-hand riches and honor: Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace: She is a tree of life to them that hold fast her words: Happy is the man that shall not forsake her." them

"them that lay hold on her, and happy is
every one that retaineth her."

The practical uses that we are to make of this
consideration are such as these.

Since our minds contribute so much to
our happiness or misery, and the temper of our
mind is often constitutional and depends upon
causes and influences out of our power, as per-
haps upon certain dispositions and affections of
our souls, perhaps upon certain humors and
alterations in our bodies, which we can neither
wholly remedy nor prevent, it may be proper
for us to address ourselves in prayer to Him in
whom "we live and move and have our be-
ing." That the temper of our mind is often
constitutional, and depends upon causes and
influences out of our power, is evident from
hence, because some persons shall be generally
gay and lively without endeavoring or even
without thinking, and shall be happy in a flow
of spirits as they are in a regular pulse, not
from any art but from nature; while others
shall be generally dull and heavy let them strive
and exert ever so much to the contrary, and
scarce any barometer shall be more sensible of
the changes of the air than their bodies. It is
not to be supposed that any persons should de-
light to make themselves miserable. It can be
no pleasure to be always complaining. There
must be something in it that they cannot help;
but what is "impossible with men" is "possi-
ble with God." And how many ways may
he

he purify or thicken our blood, and alter the humors of the body to raise or depress our spirits? how many ways may he affect our imaginations, ravish us with glorious visions or torture us with dismal ideas, and make a heaven or a hell of our own bosoms? Let us therefore beg of "the Father of spirits" to refine and exalt our spirits. Let us pray after the manner of the devout psalmist, (Psal. LI. 10, &c.) "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me: Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy spirit from me: Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit." We have the greatest reason to believe that such prayers will be heard and answered: for the Holy Ghost delights in no title or office more than that of "the Comforter," and by that he is most usually represented and promised in the New Testament (John XIV. 16.) "I will pray the Father," saith our Saviour, "and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."

2. But it is not enough barely to pray unto God; we must also contribute our own endeavors; and particularly beware of idleness, and keep ourselves constantly employed. It requires little sagacity and penetration to have observed, that the slothful and idle are always the most splenetic and melancholy. Their time hangeth heavy upon their hands, and they

frequently know not what to do with themselves. They are at leisure to fit and fancy evils which they have not; and those which they really have, they are perpetually poring and musing upon, and multiply and magnify in their own imaginations. Their spirits for want of other employment prey upon themselves, and devour their own peace and quiet. As Solomon saith elsewhere, (Eccles. IV. 5.) "The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh." Men of business and application, who are never at a loss for some employment, feel little or nothing of this lowness or depression; or if they feel something of it, yet they are not at leisure to regard it: and whereas others brood and dwell upon it, they dissipate and divert it by a perpetual succession of new objects and new ideas. Active aspiring minds are always the most chearful, as the lark is then most melodious, when on the wing and mounting toward heaven.

3. It will be an additional help and assistance, to "keep under our body and bring it into subjection," to live sober and temperate, and "using this world as not abusing it." Some persons endeavor to keep up their spirits by drinking, but this is all false fire, a flash that soon vanisheth and is gone. And eating, if it be possible is more pernicious and destructive than drinking. As the son of Sirach observes, (Ecclus XXX. 25.) "A chearful and good heart will have a care of his meat and diet."

Nothing

Nothing presseth down the mind like the load of a full stomach. A lump of lead is not heavier than a man overcharged and surfeited; his soul seemeth scarcely to inform his body, his blood can hardly circulate for overmuch repletion. (Ecclus XXXI. 19, 20.) "A very little is sufficient for a man well-nurtured, and he fetcheth not his wind short upon his bed: Sound sleep cometh of moderate eating; he riseth early, and his wits are with him."

4. But the care of the body is little in comparison with the soul; and we should learn from hence principally to improve our minds, since on our minds principally depends our happiness. Do not imagin that the circumstances of happiness are happiness itself. Not he who possesseth the best estate, but he who is blessed with the best mind; not he who enjoys the greatest preferment, but he who hath the greatest merit; not he who boasteth the highest titles, but he who is of the noblest nature, the wisest and easiest, the best and best-tempered is the happiest. Riches and power and pleasure, strength and health and long life, are to be desired only as the means, and are not to be rested in as the ends. (6) *Quod petis hic est*, the happiness that you seek centers here in your own breast; and if you cannot find it here, in vain will you look for it any where else. Be careful therefore to cultivate and im-

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prove

prove your mind, store it with useful knowledge, "commune with your own heart and search out your spirits," govern your passions, moderate your desires and affections, soften and sweeten your temper, cherish good-nature and cheerfulness, and so will you lay the best foundation for your future felicity. Other circumstances, like lesser streams falling into a river in its course, may raise and increase our happiness; but still the fountain and spring-head of all is within. And we have no reason to doubt of the future happiness of the soul after it shall be separated from the body, when so little of its present happiness ariseth from the body, even while it is united with it.

5. We may learn from hence the necessity of becoming virtuous and good, since there can be no happiness without peace and satisfaction of mind, and no peace and satisfaction of mind without virtue and goodness. Goodness is the very temper of happiness; and neither would God be the happiest being in the universe, if he was not also the best. We are obliged to be good not only out of duty, but even out of interest; not only because it is commanded, but farther because it will most effectually promote our own ease and happiness. And God is surely very gracious in requiring nothing from us but what is for our good, and we have the greatest reason to be thankful to him for joining our duty and happiness so together, that the one naturally leadeth to the other. (Psal.

(Psal. CXXVIII. 1, 2.) "Blessed is every
" one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in
" his ways; for thou shalt eat the labor of
" thine hands, happy shalt thou be, and it
" shall be well with thee." (Ecclus XXVI.
4.) "Whether a man be rich or poor, if he
" hath a good heart toward the Lord, he shall
" at all times rejoice with a chearful counte-
" nance." (1 Pet. III. 10, 11.) "He that
" will love life and see good days; let him
" refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips
" that they speak no guile; let him eschew
" evil, and do good, let him seek peace and
" ensue it." In a word, would you live at
ease and die in comfort, there is one way and
only one, (Psal. XXXVII. 37. "Keep inno-
" cency, and take heed unto the thing that
" is right, for that shall bring a man peace at
" the last: Mark the perfect man, and behold
" the upright, for the end of that man is
" peace." It is certain and indubitable, as
the apostle hath said, (1 Tim. IV. 8.) that
"godliness is profitable unto all things, hav-
" ing promise of the life that now is and of
" that which is to come."

DISSERTATION XXI.

On a chearful and a wounded spirit.

THE proverbs of Solomon are of two kinds, partly moral observations and partly moral precepts; but the observation is made always for the sake of a precept, which though not expressed is yet implied, and though he hath not drawn it for you, yet you may easily draw it for yourself. For instance, (Prov. XVIII. 14.) “The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?” This is a general observation, but the particular application belongs to you, and the proper inference you are to make for yourself, that therefore you should cultivate your mind, since your happiness or misery depends chiefly upon it; and endeavor by all means to cherish a chearful spirit as you would be happy, and avoid the contrary as you would not be miserable.

“The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity.” This life being designed for a state of trial admits of nothing pure, nothing perfect. The greatest earthly felicity, like the finest gold, is not without its alloy. The most fortunate of mankind have their misfortunes, and the most healthy cannot pass their days
with-

without some sickness and pain. And in such exigences and occasions what can support a man like a chearful spirit? Adversity with a chearful temper is certainly a much more eligible state than the greatest prosperity with an uneasy mind incapable of enjoying it. A weakly constitution with good spirits is vastly preferable to a robuster healthier body with a gloomy imagination, always apprehensive of the worst, and suffering as much by fancied evils as by real. And if "the spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity," and support him in sickness and adversity, how much more will it improve his pleasures, and add to the relish and enjoyment of health and prosperity? A *man of spirit* is a character much esteemed and affected in the world, and includes several excellent qualifications. Such a man will scorn to do any thing mean and unworthy of himself, will reject a vicious offer though ever so much to his advantage with disdain, is generous to his inferiors as he is above all scandalous submissions to his superiors, upon all occasions exerts a proper and becoming courage, is not afraid or ashamed to vindicate the truth, accounts all lying to be cowardice, and his word and honor shall be as sacred and inviolable as the bond or oath of another. Nothing almost can happen amiss to such a chearful magnanimous spirit. It equally becomes and adorns every scene and condition of life. In solitude it is the best companion, in affliction the best friend, in sick-

ness the best medicin; will give new pleasure to youth, and render even old age agreeable; improve our health, and prolong our days; and we shall set like the sun in a fine evening bright and clear to the last.

“But a wounded spirit who can bear?” The question implies an affirmation that it is altogether intolerable; and indeed what can support, enlighten, strengthen us, when our support itself becomes our burden, and the light that is in us is darkness, and what should be our remedy is our disease? If a man was blessed with the most prosperous circumstances of life, yet this single defect is enough to destroy and ruin all. For if he had not real evils to trouble him, he would frame to himself imaginary ones; and though he was ever so rich, yet he would have no relish or enjoyment of his riches, and in all probability would torment himself, as is common in such cases, with anxious fears and horrors of coming to want. Though possibly he is in a tolerable good state of health, yet he is always fancying himself ill, and imagins himself sick so long, that at last he becomes so in reality. Though possibly he is both virtuous and religious, yet he shall perplex himself with unreasonable doubts and scruples, condemn himself as guilty of crimes which he never committed, and perhaps despair of God’s mercies and his own salvation. And if “a wounded spirit” will imbitter all our pleasures and spoil the relish of prosperity,

prosperity, how much more will it increase our pains, and aggravate the weight of adversity? a broken fortune and a broken spirit are either of them bad enough; but both together are certainly intolerable: and the case is as bad or worse with a broken spirit and a broken constitution. It is as much as our spirits can do to support us in these extremities; but if they fail us, we shall be miserable and abandoned indeed. And if innocent persons can suffer so much from the effects of melancholy; how much more must the wicked feel, and how must it sharpen the stings of a guilty conscience? Hence it proceeds that so many of them prefer death to life, are tempted to lay violent hands upon themselves, and rush into they know not what misery in the next world, because they cannot endure to live any longer in this. Such was the fate of the wicked politician Achitophel and of the traitor Judas, and the like causes frequently produce the like effects.

So plain and evident and undeniable is the truth of the observation, that “the spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?” and the practical inference, the moral precept naturally resulting from hence is, that therefore we should by all means cherish a chearful temper as we would be happy, and avoid the contrary as we would not be miserable. For religion is never more mistaken than when it is taken for a dull morose melancholy thing. And yet how many
really

really very well-meaning people make it the source of infinite uneasiness to themselves and others? Instead of sweetening their temper by their religion, they sour their religion by their temper. They observe that the author and finisher of our faith is never once recorded to have *laughed*, but is said to have *wept* upon some occasions. In the midst of life they are in death. With them any diversion, any amusement "is vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Such persons may mean well indeed, but this is not religion, but superstition. Whatever is unnatural can never be religious. Let not the adversaries of our most holy faith therefore have such an advantage against it. Let them not object that we are in a more gloomy and dismal state with it, than we should be without it. Let them not imagin it designed to oppress and extinguish nature, but as it really is to refine and improve it. Let them not to follow after pleasure forsake religion, but embrace religion to obtain real and lasting pleasure.

Religion, the Christian religion is so far from being an enemy to good humor, that on the contrary it is its greatest friend; is so far from forbidding it as something unlawful, that on the contrary it enjoins it as part of our duty. Many are the passages to this purpose in scripture. St. Paul in particular saith (1 Thess. V. 16.) "Rejoice evermore:" and in another place (Philip. IV. 4.) "Rejoice in the Lord alway," and to show that he laid particular

particular stress upon this precept, he repeats it again, " Rejoice in the Lord alway, and " again I say rejoice." There is indeed (Eccles. III. 4.) " a time to weep" as well as " a time " to laugh, a time to mourn" as well as " a " time to dance ;" there are seasons proper for humiliation and contrition, as well as for jubilee and thanksgiving. We may practise the one or the other as particular occasions serve or particular exigences require : but the general turn, the general disposition of our souls, our habit, our custom, our manner, our temper should be to " rejoice evermore." It is said " Pray without ceasing," not that we are to be, nor indeed can be continually praying ; but we should live always in a devout frame and temper of mind, in a continual sense of devotion, though not in the continual exercise of it. In like manner it is said " Rejoice ever- " more," not that we can always actually rejoice ; in such a chequered scene of good and evil, every act of life cannot be joy ; but the principle, the spirit should always be within us, though not always exerted ; we must rejoice, though not always in act, yet always in habit. " Praying without ceasing" is an habitual spirit of devotion ; and " rejoicing ever- " more" is an habitual spirit of joy and chearfulness. The acts may be occasional ; but the habit, the temper must be perpetual. It should be the temper of the soul always to rejoice, as it is the nature of the sun always to shine, though

though that fun is sometimes overcast, and sometimes even eclipsed.

Yet on the other hand religion encourageth nothing of a light unthinking trifling mirth. This is so much below religion, that it is below a man. It is no better than the crackling of thorns, a sudden blaze and soon over. It is so far from being agreeable to religion, that nothing is apter to betray us into irreligion. Of this sort of mirth it is that the wise man declares (Eccles. II. 2.) "I said of laughter It is mad, and of mirth what doth it?" They too who are the most merry are seldom or never the most chearful. If they have their tides of spirits higher than other men, they have their ebbs as much lower. A sigh most commonly succeeds a laugh: "Even in laughter," as Solomon saith, (Prov. XIV. 13.) "the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness."

The man who liveth agreeably to reason, agreeably to religion, steereth a middle course between these two extremes, avoiding the gulph of melancholy on the one hand, nor yet running on the quicksands of mirth on the other. He is neither puritan like precise and solemn, nor libertin like light and profane. He is never more merry than wise, tempers mirth with discretion, relieves discretion with mirth. As his satisfaction is never empty, it is never loud, but inlivens and inlightens his soul, as the sun doth the world, without noise. For the emptiest

tiest things are the most noisy; and as the son of Sirach saith (XXI. 20.) "A fool lifteth up his voice with laughter, but a wise man doth scarce smile a little."

It is true there is naturally a great difference in mens complexions and tempers; some are of a more mercurial, others are of a more saturnine disposition; some have more fire, others have more phlegm in their constitution; these may sometimes find it more difficult to be chearful than those, but however all are obliged to be chearful. As all have not tempers alike disposed to forgiveness and charity, yet all are obliged to be forgiving and charitable; as all have not equally the gift of chastity and temperance, yet all are obliged to be chaste and temperate: so in like manner though all are not equally blessed with the spirit of chearfulness, yet it is the duty of all to be chearful. Chearfulness is a duty that we owe to *ourselves*, a duty to *others*, a duty to *God*.

Chearfulness is a duty that we owe to *ourselves*, for it is every man's duty to promote his own happiness by all the innocent means he can; and there is no possibility of being happy without being chearful. A life without chearfulness is as unpleasant as a day without the sun. Indeed such a life hardly deserves the name of *life*. "All the days of the afflicted are evil," as Solomon truly saith (Prov. XV. 15.) "but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast." It is also wonderful how much the temper

temper of the mind affects the body. A chearful mind is the spirit that feedeth the lamp of life, and when the spirit is gone the flame can last no longer. Low-spirited persons seldom see many days; the longest livers commonly are the men of some fire and genius who make the pleasant agreeable old men. As Solomon expresseth it, (Prov. XVII. 22.) "A merry heart doeth good like a medicin, but a broken spirit drieth the bones." If the temper of the mind thus affects the body, how much more the mind itself. All the noble qualities and indowments of mind, lively wit and solid judgment, clear understanding and fine imagination, sagacity to discover and memory to retain, nature may plant, art may water, but chearfulness giveth the increase. Destroy this one, and in effect you destroy them all. "Give not over therefore thy mind to heaviness," this is the advice of the wise son of Sirach, (Ecclus XXX. 21, &c.) "and afflict not thyself in thine own counsel. The gladness of the heart is the life of man, and the joyfulness of a man prolongeth his days: Love thine own soul, and comfort thy heart, remove sorrow far from thee, for sorrow hath killed many, and there is no profit therein."

This is obligation enough to be chearful, but the obligation to it is doubled, it being a duty to *others* as well as ourselves. For man is designed for a sociable creature, but the melancholy man cutteth himself off in a manner
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from society. He is another Timon or Man-hater; he flieth from the world, and sometimes it would be happy too if he could fly from himself. "A little leaven (1 Cor. V. 6.) "leaveneth the whole lump;" and one splenetic melancholy man dampeth the mirth and good humor of a whole company. But this is not the worst. As one ill quality generally begets another, the spleen seldom cometh single; it is the evil spirit that taketh unto it seven other spirits worse than itself; and you rarely know men splenetic and melancholy, but at the same time they are sullen, peevish, jealous, rigid, hardly obliging and hardly to be obliged. In reality cheerfulness is the life and soul of all the social virtues. It is not to be conceived how a man can be agreeable without it. It is showing others that you are pleased with them, and engages them in return to be pleased with you.

But cheerfulness is still farther enforced by being a duty to God. It is indeed an ill return to the father of mercies for all the good that we enjoy in this life, and all that we hope for in the next to be sullen and discontented. A cheerful temper is an habitual gratitude, a continual thanksgiving to almighty God in all his dispensations. And indeed who can contemplate the wonderful works of creation and providence, the redemption of lost mankind, the remission of our sins, the comforts of the holy Ghost, the easy service that is required of us,
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the gracious promises which are made to us, our resurrection from the dead, our exaltation into heaven; and would not, as St. Peter emphatically expresseth it, (1 Pet. I. 8, 9.) "re-
 " joice with joy unspeakable and full of glory,
 " receiving the end of our faith, even the sal-
 " vation of our souls?" It would be a sort of denial of our faith to give way to dismal thoughts and terrible apprehensions. The spirit of melancholy is not only contrary to the spirit of the Christian religion, but is enough to extinguish it in ourselves and others. Instead of inviting and engaging men to the service of God, it is enough to discourage and deter them from it. One dull religionist produceth many latitudinarians. A memorable instance we had of this in the last century; for I believe every one will allow, that the looseness immorality and atheism which reigned after the Restoration were in great measure owing to the preciseness solemnity and over-acted sanctity of the times before; it being common with men in avoiding one extreme to run into another. God would have all his creatures serve him with a willing mind and gladness of heart. The dull dead worshipper is no worshipper. "Serve
 " the Lord with gladness," says the psalmist (C. 2.) "come before his presence with sing-
 " ing." Hymns and thanksgivings are the most noble part of devotion, the worship of angels imitated by men, the service of heaven begun upon earth.

Well;

Well; but admitting that it is our duty to be chearful, yet it may be asked, How is it possible for a man to keep up his spirits, while he is languishing in sickness or overwhelmed with afflictions? As for sickness, it is not expected that we should be as chearful then as at another time; but still "the spirit of a man," as we have seen, "will sustain his infirmity." There are persons who are scarce ever well, and yet are always chearful. So that want of health doth not always necessarily infer want of spirits. There may be such a thing as a sound mind in an unsound body, so that the one shall be too strong and active for the other. The man seemeth to be all spirit, and leaveth as it were his body behind him.

As for afflictions, we cannot indeed pretend with the Stoics to be insensible of them, but every Christian knoweth that it is our duty to bear them patiently. "Whatsoever is brought upon thee," saith the son of Sirach, (Ecclus II. 4.) "take chearfully." To a good man all disappointments are for the best, usually here, certainly hereafter. A fond mother hath lost her only child, and like Rachael refuseth to be comforted: but how doth she know but this is done more in mercy to both than in judgment to either; how doth she know but he is taken from the evil to come, and might have occasioned greater trouble by his life than now by his death? A man hath been unfortunate in his affairs, hath been disappointed of a

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place, or hath not succeeded to an estate, and is abandoned to sorrow: but how doth he know but he should have made a wrong use of them, and is better without them than with them; how doth he know but they might have drawn him into snares and dangers, and what seemed a blessing in expectation might have proved a curse in possession? Recollect the former passages of your lives; and I believe there are none who have not some time or other had what may be called *fortunate crosses*, *lucky disappointments*. In the lottery of life blanks often prove the highest prizes. As the apostle expresseth it, (Rom. VIII. 28.) "All things work together for good to them that love God." But should the good man's crosses and disappointments prove all for the worst here, yet they cannot fail of being for the best hereafter: And who would not contentedly weather out the storm, which he knoweth will bring him unto the haven where he would be? who would not take chearfully this "light affliction for a moment (2 Cor. IV. 17.) which he knoweth will work for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory?" Sure we are there never was a greater sufferer than the blessed Jesus, and yet he was the farthest removed from a morose melancholy character; he kept company and was conversable; "he came eating and drinking," as the scripture phrase is; and the beginning of his miracles was

very true

was the converting of water into wine at a wedding.

There is one case indeed an exception to this general rule of chearfulness, for none are obliged to impossibilities; and that is when the melancholy is not the fault of the mind but the distemper of the body, *ægrescitque medendo* and groweth worse by curing. This is a case not to be blamed, but pitied; and instead of being to be ridiculed for a fanciful vaporish disorder is to be talked of and thought of with the utmost tenderness in nature. But then we should consider with ourselves, Are we sure that our melancholy is the distemper of the body, and not the fault of the mind? are we sure that we do not add by the badness of our temper to the badness of our disease? are we sure that we strive all we can against it, and are overcome at last by force and necessity? There is a great deal in resisting melancholy thoughts, in resolving not to give way to them, in determining to make one's self easy. Melancholy thoughts are dispelled by resolution like mists by the morning sun. It may be said in this case as well as in some others, (James IV. 7.) "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

The most effectual way of resisting evil is to keep always employed, employed always in what is good. It is generally the offspring of idleness; at least if idleness be not its parent, it is always its nurse. You seldom know a man of business troubled with it. It is oftener

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a companion in their solitary hours to the men of pleasure. It hardly ever is seen on the public stage of the world, but like a bat flieth about lonely walks and darksome cloisters. It is scarce known to those who are inured to labor and exercise. They who have the least to do, and the least else to trouble them, are most troubled with it. They who feel the fewest real evils in life make to themselves the most imaginary ones.

But it is not enough to be employed, we must be employed always in what is good. Guilt has no title, can have no title to chearfulness. A man wicked and merry is like the madman in the Proverbs (XXVI. 18, 19.) " casting firebrands arrows and death, and saying Am not I in sport ?" There can be no true joy without religion, so far is religion from being inconsistent with joy. A prelate famous in his generation [Bishop Hacket] had it for his motto, and we ought every one to have it for a rule of life, *Inservi Deo et lætare, Serve God and be chearful.*

Many circumstances may concur for a time to raise and elevate our spirits, as youth, health, fortune, friends, and other delights and gratifications; but there can be no true essential lasting joy and chearfulness without " having always (Acts XXIV. 16.) a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men." A good conscience will accompany us through every stage of life, and not only make life happier,

happier, but death easier, and support and comfort us when all other comforts fail us. That is the great time of trial, and a friend in extremity is a friend indeed, and worth a thousand at any other season. What is beauty at the blast of death, but a fading dying flower? What are riches, when we can neither enjoy them, nor carry them with us? What profit is there then in titles and honors, or what good can power and greatness do us? They may possibly serve to reproach and upbraid us, but they cannot relieve and assist us. What will then become of all the boasted gratifications and delights of life? in what stead will they stand us, or what service will they do us? Alas! then, if not before, we shall find them to be lighter than vanity, shall look upon them as nothing or worse than nothing; they cannot give us pleasure, it will be happy if they do not give us pain. Our friends and relations standing round our bed, sorrowful and weeping, can administer little help and comfort to us. Their concern and commiseration will rather soften and weaken our minds than support and strengthen us. Nothing can yield real comfort in those moments but the consciousness of a life well spent here, and in consequence of that the assured hope of everlasting happiness hereafter. We may then look death in the face not only without concern but with pleasure; we shall consider it not as leaving the world but as going to God: we shall feel

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such satisfaction springing up in the soul, that we shall be less sensible of the pains of a dying body; we shall quit the stage of life like a graceful actor, and be more than mortal in mortality; we shall even anticipate the joys of the next world before we enter upon them, and be able to say with the triumphant apostle, (2 Tim. IV. 7, 8.) "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." And all who see it and hear it shall say God grant that I may die in like manner, (Numb. XXIII. 10.) "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

DISSERTATION XXII.

On flattery.

OF all the abuses of speech and language there are not many more pernicious and fatal, and at the same time more familiar and common than *flattery*. All people exclaim against it, and yet almost all in their turns are more or less guilty of it. There are scarce any persons so great but they bow down to some idol and caress some favorite or other: and there

there are scarce any so mean but they have now and then a little incense offered to them, and are admired and commended for some performance some quality or other. Though without doubt the higher the situation, the more it is exposed to flattery; which pierceth like the lightning, and like the lightning too usually passeth over the lowly shrubs, and doeth the most damage to the towering oaks and lofty cedars. No body flatters another but to serve his own ends and purposes; and in the same proportion as more is to be got by them, so consequently greater court is paid to superiors than inferiors. It is not improperly expressed paying of *court*, because this vice abounds most there. It is a weed that groweth in every soil, but flourisheth most in the sun-shine of high places. But the vice is not confined there but extends farther. Commendation and compliment are looked upon as a kind of tribute due to the other sex, and through the custom and fashion of an insincere world are become such necessary ingredients in polite conversation, that the man who should converse with the most sincerity, I am afraid, would be thought to have the least good breeding.

Nay common conversation itself is quite overrun with ceremony and compliment, professions which are seldom intended and promises which are seldom kept, commendations to your face, and malicious insinuations behind your back. The old English plainness and integrity

are grown out of fashion. Words have almost lost their use and significancy. Language is in a manner become a lie, and men continually speak one thing and mean another. They make inquiries, as if they were solicitous, about the health of persons for whom they have no manner of kindness or concern. They are often extremely glad to see those whom they had much rather escape and avoid. They express the highest value and esteem for persons who are almost unknown to them, are very much their friends for no cause, and infinitely obliged to them for no obligation. They are wondrous liberal and profuse in their professions, how much they are at your service, and how ready to obey your commands: but were you really to ask them any favor, they would look grave, contract themselves, and shrink from the touch like a sensitive plant. They mourn with those who mourn, and rejoice with those who rejoice, condole with you upon any misfortune, and congratulate with you upon any success, though perhaps they are secretly pleased with the one, and inwardly grieved at the other. An honest man would almost be sick of the world to see the dissimulation that is practised in it; and to converse with them upon equal terms, he must wish either that himself had less sincerity, or mankind had more.

The delusion would be less prevailing, and we might better guard against it, if it was only
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of one kind, and all were treated and addressed alike; but it is cooked up differently for different palates; and if your vanity cannot be easily attacked one way, yet perhaps it may another. No titles and commendations can be too fulsome and extravagant for some persons; they readily swallow the grossest and most servile adulation, as Herod (Acts XII. 22.) was complimented for his oration with "the voice of a god and not of a man;" tyrants have been called (1) *benefactors* and *servieurs*, and such monsters of men, as Caligula and Nero, have been worshipped as gods.

But if you are too delicate to bear with such fulsome compliments to your face, then perhaps the flatterer will spare your modesty, and only trumpet forth your praises behind your back, but in such a manner that they shall be sure to be echoed to you again; and by this management he deceives more effectually, as it appears freer from design. Some insinuate themselves under the mask of friendship, pretend wonderful zeal and affection for your service, are inquisitive into your affairs, are communicative of their own, submit to your judgment, desire your advice and opinion, and would have you believe that you govern them, when perhaps all the while they secretly govern you. Others recommend themselves not so much by what they say as by their very silence,

(1) *Euergetes*. *Soter*.

(2) *Bias*

silence, are all attention whenever you speak, always admit never contradict whatever you say, presume not to commend but humbly imitate your ways and manners, and imitate your faults and imperfections rather than fail; as Plato's scholars imitated their master's stooping in the shoulders, and Aristotle's his stammering, and Dionysius his courtiers his short-sightedness, and Alexander's the inclination of his neck and the harshness of his voice. Some are all smoothness and complaisance, and some again all rusticity and roughness, the better to work their purpose, to disguise their design and instil their poison. Sometimes they will rail plentifully at others, and sometimes even find fault with themselves, to feed your vanity, and incline you to think more favorably of yourself upon the comparison. The baits are various as the prey is so, and the greatest art is to conceal the art and design; for nothing can be more nauseous and offensive than open and undisguised flattery. (Prov. I. 17.) "Surely in vain the net is spread in sight of any bird."

But possibly you may say within yourself, where is the great harm of all this? If people will be pleased with empty compliments, why should we not be willing to please them at so cheap a rate? Is not a civil lie that will do no harm and will oblige, better than a blunt truth that will offend, and put a man out of humor and out of countenance? Indeed if fine speeches and compliments were only words of course,
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which were understood for nothing on one side, as they commonly are meant for nothing on the other, we might pass them over as matters of form below our notice and animadversion; but I conceive there is greater harm in them than is generally apprehended, and Solomon was plainly of opinion (Prov. XXVI. 28.) that “a flattering mouth worketh ruin.” It *worketh ruin* in a double respect; and we will endeavor to show a little in what follows the great evil and mischief of it both to *the flatterer himself* and to *the person that is flattered*.

I. To *the person that is flattered*. It is in plain English making him a fool, a prey and property to others: and it is an indication of a little mind, a weakness that we all disown, a vanity that we all pretend to be above, to be fond of flattery. And generally we may observe, that they are the most ridiculously fond of praise who least deserve it; the dullest will hear you extol their wit, and the plainest people their person with pleasure: and the commendations which every body else perceives to be given them in banter they will apply with great seriousness to themselves. Not but some of great parts have likewise as great vanity, and with their ears drink greedily their own praises and commendations: but it is very well known that men of parts are not always men of judgment, and in this they manifestly discover a want of just penetration and discernment, and hereby are often made the dupes and instruments

ments of persons of much inferior understanding than themselves. Nay though we entertain but a mean opinion of those who commend us, yet commonly we are weak enough to be pleased with their commendations, and come in time to think more favorably of them only for professing to think so well of us; and can any thing give designing men a greater advantage against us?

As it hinders us from discerning the characters of other men, so it prevents us likewise from gaining a just knowledge of our own. It is an enemy to all truth, and especially to that divine precept "Know yourself." We trust more to the pleasing representations of others than our own experiences and reflections; and so put a double cheat upon ourselves, first in believing that they speak their real sentiments, and then in conceiving that their sentiments are true. If we were to sit to our painters, and a truer likeness and resemblance should be drawn, we should find ourselves perhaps other kind of creatures, and be differently affected.

And from this ignorance of ourselves, especially by the help of a little flattery, we are apt to grow proud and conceited of ourselves not only without reason, but often against reason. We fondly fancy our merits to be greater, and our failings to be less, than they are in reality; this we are too much inclined to do through the natural vanity of our hearts, and much more when that vanity is fed by the

compliments and commendations of others. No person swelleth a man more than flattery doth with vanity and self-conceit. We grow thereupon remiss and careless, as if we had already attained perfection, and there was no farther room or occasion for improvement. We expect the same sort of language from every body, and being constantly used to it by some are cruelly disappointed if we receive it not from others, and reckon them rude and unmannerly; and are so blown up that rather than not be commended, we will commend ourselves.

As it renders us conceited of our good qualities, so it hardens and confirms us in all our ill ones, and induces us to think our defects to be perfections, our very vices to be virtues. We grow above all reproof and advice, and if any one should presume to censure and admonish us ever so reasonably, we should probably impute it all to rank malice and burning envy, and embrace the sawning flatterer for the dearest of friends, and reject the real friend as the worst of enemies. Nay we may come in time to think so highly of ourselves, and attribute so much to our own gifts and talents, as to forget God the giver.

How many youths of great hopes and expectations have been stoppt short in their progress to virtue, and enticed into the ways of vice by the siren song of flattery! How many women have been adored only to be ruined,

and have afterwards found to their sorrow that the most cringing slaves always prove the most haughty tyrants! How many men have been cajoled and flattered out of their estate, out of their reputation, out of their understanding, and have suffered others to feed upon their vitals only for feeding them with empty praise! How many private families have been infested with these inmates; and what great table is there almost without some parasite or other! How many public societies have been made miserable by these ear-wigs wriggling in the ears of princes and governors; and how many kings have been betrayed and ruined by their unworthy favorites, been flattered to think they had so much power that they have forfeited all power, and have not only lost the affections of their people, but perhaps their lives and kingdoms! So that the (2) philosopher, being asked which was the most hurtful of all creatures, had great reason to make answer as he did, that of all wild ones a tyrant was the worst, and of all tame ones a flatterer.

II. But *the flatterer himself* is concerned as well as the person that is flattered; and if we impute folly to the one, I am afraid that we must ascribe nothing less than knavery to the other. It may be weak to believe, but it is wicked to make, great professions of respect and kindness without any truth or sincerity; and

(2) Bias in Plutarch.

(3) See

and we can scarcely be guilty of a more dangerous kind of hypocrisy, of a worse sort of falsehood and lying. It is a violation of truth, that moral truth which ought to be preserved in all our words and actions; and it is more especially a violation of the Christian religion, which unites us in closer bonds of alliance and affection, considers us not only as fellow creatures but as brethren and members of the same body, and therefore strictly enjoins us "to put away lying (Eph. IV. 25.) and to speak truth every man with his neighbour, for we are members one of another."

The usual motives too to this vice greatly aggravate the guilt of it. Sometimes a spirit of ridicule, to expose men to contempt and laughter; but this is cruel and inhuman, and though it may be sport to you, yet you should consider that it may be death to them. Sometimes a spirit of vanity, rank pride under the disguise of humility, and we commend others only that they may be induced to commend us again. Sometimes it proceeds from worse motives; and many a man and many a woman have been admired and commended that they might the more easily be deluded and ruined. In short it is always founded in some bad principle or other, and men flatter only to betray, and to make their advantage of another's weakness and credulity.

But though perhaps it may be cunning, yet certainly it is not wise, as indeed nothing can be

be that is not honest. It is an indignity and meanness that a generous spirit would scorn to submit to, to cringe and fawn and flatter the greatest man above him. Besides it is very difficult to maintain a constant scene of dissimulation; truth and nature will sometimes break forth from men, if they are not continually upon their guard; and so they must live always in constraint, and often disguise and defend one lie by another. But generally they are apt to discover themselves by overacting their part; and while they endeavor to make fools of others render even themselves ridiculous. They surfeit us more by their excessive civility than others can possibly offend us by their rudeness; and so very much complaisance is infinitely worse and more troublesome than none at all. They who commend every body do in effect commend no body. Praise is never grateful, but when it is rarely bestowed. It is like perfume of which a little at a time may be perhaps agreeable and refreshing; but too much of it is enough to make one sick, and it is always greatly to be suspected that it is intended only to conceal an ill scent.

Neither is this the way to succeed and prosper at last. Such arts and expedients may serve for a time, but when the flatterer is once detected, his credit is blasted for ever. His finest speeches and compliments pass for nothing; there is no dependence upon any thing that he says; and he will not, even though he speak
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the truth, be believed. And as the character is justly odious to men, so must it be particularly offensive to a God of truth. (Prov. XII. 22.) “ Lying lips are abomination to the Lord; but they that deal truly are his delight.” The prophets denounce “ a woe to them who sow pillows to all arm-holes, and dawb with untempered mortar;” and among those who shall have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone there is particular mention (Rev. XX. 15.) “ whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”

Having seen the great evil and mischief of this fashionable vice, both with respect to *the flatterer himself* and to *the person that is flattered*, let us now conclude with a word of exhortation and advice to each of them.

1. *To the person that is flattered.* Endeavor by all means to know yourself better and to love yourself less, and there cannot be a more effectual antidote against the poison of flattery. The flatterer without would have little advantage over us, if there was not another and greater flatterer within, that took all commendation in good part and readily improved it. If we were duly sensible of our failings and imperfections, we should not so willingly receive the praises which do not belong to us; but should think them designed to show us rather what we ought to be than what we really are. You should also entertain a wise jealousy, a prudent distrust of others as well as of your-

self: and notwithstanding all their art and address, yet with proper care and circumspection a skilful eye may distinguish (3) a flatterer from a friend, as you may counterfeit money from true. The flatterer will commend and perhaps imitate your ways and manners: but observe the whole tenor of his behaviour, and you will perceive strange dissonance and disagreement; he will commend one thing in you, and quite the contrary in another. A friend will commend and imitate only what is right, but the flatterer right and wrong indiscriminately. The flatterer endeavors only to divert and entertain, but a friend to please and profit together. A friend will reprove you for your faults upon occasion, and most for the greatest; but the flatterer will pass over the greater and reprove you only for the lesser, and that perhaps in such a manner as to make you think them none at all. You may distinguish likewise the flatterer from a friend by his over-obsequiousness. The flatterer would not fail in the least tittle of ceremony and respect; but a friend is more indifferent about forms, and more regards realities. A friend will serve you only in what is just and honest; but the flatterer will oblige at any rate, and even pimp to your vices. A friend often doeth good silently and unknown; but the flatterer is more ostentatious, appears to stir and bustle more, and

(3) See Plutarch's treatise *φίλος*, *How any one may distinguish*
Πως αὖ τις διακρίνει τὸν κολάκην τὸν φίλον *a flatterer from a friend, from*
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and will take care that you shall fully understand how much you are obliged to him. The flatterer, like the swallow, always follows the sun, attends you in the summer of your prosperity, but forsakes you in the winter of adversity; but a friend is a friend at all times and seasons, and especially in any distress or difficulty. By these and the like characteristics you may distinguish the one from the other; not that we would have you spoil the relish of life by unreasonable jealousy and suspicion, and deceive yourself for very fear of being deceived by others. It is better to be one of those open generous creatures to be betrayed sometimes, than to be so overwise and overwary as never to trust or believe any body. No doubt some persons may be very sincere in their commendations; only let it be your care and endeavor to deserve them: and then if they flatter you, it cannot hurt you; that will be turning flattery itself into truth.

2. To *the flatterer himself*. If you would be really wise, be sincere and honest. Be above flattering others, as you would not be flattered and deceived yourself; let your tongue be always the interpreter of your mind, speak as you think, fulfil what you promise, and be what you appear. Not that you are to tell all your mind upon all occasions, but never upon any occasion say any thing contrary to it. You are

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whence the learned reader may observe several hints to be borrow-
ed in this discourse.

not obliged to speak all the truth, but be sure speak nothing but the truth. You may be reserved and prudent without deceit and dissimulation, as you may be sincere and honest without bluntness and ill manners. The greatest integrity is consistent with the greatest good-breeding: and indeed I do not see how any one can be reputed a gentleman or a man of honor without it. Be just to merit, and give honor to whom honor is due; but scorn to prostitute it by bestowing it on the worthless and undeserving. Please and oblige every one if it be possible; but do not, to please or oblige any one, forfeit your integrity. Reverence all men, but above all men reverence truth and honor. This is the most easy as it is the most natural behaviour, will establish your credit and reputation, add weight and authority to every thing that you say, and serve all wise ends and purposes better than all the little expedients and artifices in the world. "The folly of fools," as the wisest of men asserts, (Prov. XIV. 8.) "is deceit;" they fancy themselves to be very wise, and think to impose upon others: but all such wisdom is really the height of folly, and they never more egregiously deceive themselves. There is not a more amiable quality than sincerity; it giveth a lustre and value to all the rest; and the greatest parts and abilities without it only make a man so much the worse, more formidable and more dangerous. It is a qualification that our Saviour thought very singular

gular and worth recommending, (John I. 47.) "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile:" and it was part of his own excellent character, (1 Pet. II. 22.) that "he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." The psalmist maketh it one of the necessary conditions of our present holiness and future happiness, (Psal. XV. 1, 2.) "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell on thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart." And to finish, as we began, with a sentence of Solomon, (Prov. XII. 19.) "A lying tongue is but for a moment, but the lip of truth shall be established for ever."

DISSERTATION XXIII.

On reproof.

IT is a sign of no very virtuous age, when a man only for doing his duty shall be thought to be guilty of rudeness and ill manners. The general turn of conversation is more to please and entertain than improve and instruct; and truth is not so much regarded as ceremony and compliment. In company we commend others

oftner for the good qualities which they have not, than reprove them for the ill ones which they really have; and rather speak the most pernicious lies which may oblige than the most wholesome truths which may offend. Not but we are quick-sighted enough to spy our neighbours faults, and forward enough to condemn them; but not where it may do any good, *to their faces*; but possibly where it may do infinite harm, *behind their backs*. Solomon, who so severely censures flattery, and says that “a flattering mouth worketh ruin,” as strongly recommends reproof, and declares (Prov. XXVII. 5, 6.) that “open rebuke is better than secret love;” the rebuking of a brother or neighbour freely for his faults is better than loving him without the like expressions of kindness: “Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful;” the just reproofs of a friend are evident tokens of real regard and esteem, but the warmest professions of an enemy are to be suspected of fraud and treachery; for as it is said afterwards (XXIX. 5.) “A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet.” It may be proper therefore, after discoursing on flattery, to press and inculcate the duty of brotherly reproof; for it is not only the duty of the ministers of the gospel, or of parents to children, or of masters to servants, (though of those more especially) but of man to man, and of Christian to Christian. But
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though the thing is to be done, yet it should be done with judgment and discretion, or perhaps better omitted; and if men are offended at you for taking (as they think) an indecent liberty, that possibly may be owing as much to the manner as to the matter of your reproofs. And therefore we will not only endeavor to show first the duty and expediency of brotherly reproof, but also consider secondly after what manner this duty may be best performed, that we may not do more hurt than good, where only good is intended.

I. We are to show the duty and expediency of brotherly reproof; and it is so much the more expedient as it is so little practised among us. Every Jew was to a Jew, as every man is to a Christian, a neighbour and a brother; and the law implies (Levit. XIX. 17.) that it is hatred to our neighbour and brother not to rebuke him upon occasion; "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour;" and it is not only love to him, but love to ourselves too, and we cannot entirely omit it without sharing in his guilt; for the words following, "and not suffer sin upon him" are rendered in the margin "that thou bear not sin for him." But it is not only enjoined by the law, it is also a precept of the gospel. It is our Saviour's own direction, (Luke XVII. 3.) "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him;" and if we should rebuke him for trespasses against

ourselves, it surely argues greater generosity to do it for offenses committed against others. The apostle advises us (Gal. VI. 1.) "if a man be overtaken in a fault," to endeavor by all winning ways "to restore him;" and "exhort one another daily," says he in another place, (Heb. III. 13.) "lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

It is the duty of all men, and especially of Christians, to promote, as much as in them lieth, the spiritual and temporal welfare of others; and in many cases there is not any more effectual way of promoting it than reasonable reproof. It is inhuman to be a careless and indifferent spectator of what passes in the world, and to have no concern, no feeling for others. "Am I my brother's keeper?" was the answer of Cain; (Gen. IV. 9.) and they must like him have put off their nature, who have put off all sympathy and tenderness for their brethren. The duty appertains in some measure to every body, but rises in proportion to mens authority and abilities and opportunities of doing it with success: and the omission of it is the more sinful and shameful because good advice costeth us nothing; we may communicate knowlege without impairing our own; our candle will not burn less bright, nor be sooner consumed for lighting another's. But if it should be attended with some inconveniences, we have yet stronger motives and obligations to it.

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We should do it out of zeal for the glory of God, and to propagate as much as we can truth and righteousness in the earth: and shall we be so solicitous upon all occasions to promote our own interests, and have so little concern for the advancement of religion and virtue? If we are ashamed of God's cause in this world, is it not just that he should be ashamed of us in the world to come? We should do it out of love and affection to our brethren, and what good effects may not the advice of a friend have upon a friend? or for want of it what evil consequences may not follow? and how many have perished whom timely admonition might have preserved? The Jewish law enjoined that whoever met an ox or an ass going astray, he should conduct it home to the owner; and will not Christian charity much more oblige us to reclaim a man from the error of his way and "save a soul from death?" We should do it even out of love and regard to ourselves, that we may discharge our own consciences, and that conniving we may not seem consenting, or becoming any ways "partakers of other mens sins."

The good effects would be worthy of the causes and motives from whence they proceed. It would be of wonderful service to the cause of religion, encourage virtue and put vice out of countenance, keep bold offenders in awe, and either prevent their miscarriages, or be the most likely means to reform them; and the
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private admonitions of a friend may sink deep, where the public calls of the ministry cannot be heard or cannot enter. It would greatly refine and improve conversation, introduce openness and sincerity, banish flattery, prevent jealousies and misunderstandings, and make company a school of good manners instead of (what it too often is) a nursery of vice and folly. It would besides be a mighty satisfaction to ourselves, and no pleasure can be greater or more godlike than giving good advice, informing the ignorant and directing the erroneous. As tempting and encouraging men to sin is doing the work of the devil, so recovering and inciting them to their duty is doing the work of the Holy Ghost. It will most probably gain the good-will and esteem of men, for as Solomon observes, (Prov. XXVIII. 23.) "He that rebuketh a man, afterwards shall find more favor than he that flattereth with the tongue;" and (XXIV. 24, 25.) "He that saith to the wicked thou art righteous, him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him; but to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them:" and most certainly it will recommend us to the favor of God; for as St. James asserts, (James V. 19, 20.) "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth and one convert him; Let him know that he, which converteth the sinner from the error of his way,

“ way, shall save a soul from death and shall
 “ hide a multitude of sins.”

II. Having thus briefly, but yet I hope fully, evinced the duty and expediency of brotherly reproof, let us now consider secondly after what manner this duty may be best performed; only premising that if there is a duty in giving advice upon occasion, there is also a reciprocal duty in receiving it; and it is the conceitedness and sufficiency of men, that renders them so very unwilling to be told of their faults, and discourages a friend from speaking his sentiments for fear of incurring their displeasure. But however whether they will hear or whether they will forbear, we shall have done our duty and shall have delivered our own souls; only we should take care to make the reproof as pleasing and agreeable as we possibly can, that the means may not defeat the end, and that we may not do more hurt than good, where only good is intended. And in order hereunto several precautions are to be observed with relation to the *qualifications* and *intentions* of those who reprove, and the *characters* and *tempers* of those who are to be reprov-
 ed, and the *occasions* and *times* of reprov-
 ing, and the *address* and *spirit* wherewith it is
 done, though after all rules and directions
 much must still be left to every one's prudence
 and discretion.

III. It is certain every one is not *qualified* to be
 a reprover and censor of manners. Yet gener-
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rally we may observe, that they who are least capable of judging, are most forward and presuming to pass sentence upon every person and every thing. There is no character so great, no subject so sacred, as to be exempt from their jurisdiction. The reverence of the church and the majesty of the throne cannot secure the one or the other from the petulance of such pragmatistical censors, "who have said "With our tongue will we prevail, our lips are "our own; who is lord over us?" Some sort of dignity and authority is requisite for that office, or contempt of your person will beget contempt of your advice and opinion. Reproving another is assuming a manifest superiority over him; and therefore inferiors ought to be very cautious how they find fault with their superiors; superiors may with much better grace admonish their inferiors; and by how much the greater their natural superiority, their assuming will appear so much the less. The least that can be expected from every body is, that he should be free from those faults himself, which he condemns and reproves in others, otherwise his censures will lose their edge and keenness, and will look like mockery and abuse of himself or others. One who is a bad writer himself can have no pretence to criticise the works of other authors. Those are the best qualified to find faults, who commit none. A good life will give double efficacy to reproof, and there are
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not only your words to enforce it, but what will be regarded more, your example. (1) Who can endure to hear the factious declaiming against sedition, or the fat and pampered preaching up abstinence and mortification, the avaricious extolling charity, or the prodigal and extravagant reading lectures of œconomy and frugality? “Physician heal thyself” will be constantly retorted in such cases; and indeed how can you see clearly to pull the “mote out of your brother’s eye,” when you have “a beam in your own eye?”

But it is not enough to possess the talents and qualifications proper for reproofing, but you should also manifest your good *intentions*, which are principally to be regarded in this as well as other actions. You should show plainly that your reproofs are intended only to do good, that they flow from benevolence and affection, and proceed not from the least malice or resentment; that they are free from all mixture of self-love, and calculated purely for the advantage of the person reproofed and by no means to serve your own private views and interests. Some persons find fault only for the sake of finding fault and to indulge their spleen and ill-humor; others do it out of pride and vanity, and to show, as they fondly imagin, their superior judgment and understanding: some are impertinently busy and pragmatistical, and love to be meddlers and advisers

(1) Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes? Juv.

vifers in other mens matters ; others easily pass over all other the greatest crimes, but make heavy complaints of the slightest injury done to themselves ; their counsels and admonitions are only self-love ; but nothing renders reproof more ineffectual than any mixture and allay of these kinds, and instead of doing good to others it will only procure hatred to yourself. A good intention will make your advice well accepted, though perhaps it should not prove the most proper, nor be delivered in the most proper manner ; but let your wisdom be ever so great and your address ever so graceful, an evil intention will sully and spoil all. No body will thank you for the best advice, when they find it suited rather to your humor and your interest than their own.

Regard should likewise be had to mens *characters* and *tempers*, for neither is every one fit to be reproved any more than every one is qualified to reprove. A person, who is sure to disparage and neglect one's advice, one would not be too forward to advise, nor sow good seed in a barren and ungrateful soil ; and much less would one interpose one's opinion, where it will not only have no good effect upon others, but possibly may be of great disservice and detriment to one's self. For there are natures which are not to be melted ; they are rather hardened by reproof ; they look upon all advice as insolence and impertinence ; their hatred and ill will is the least return that we can expect for

for our good offices : and our Saviour himself hath taught us, (Matt. VII. 6.) “ Give not
“ that which is holy unto the dogs, neither
“ cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they
“ trample them under their feet, and turn
“ again and rend you.” A proper discrimination therefore is to be made of persons and characters, and we should consider what it becomes them to hear as well as us to speak, lest the good that we intend should prove the occasion of greater evil. (Prov. IX. 7, 8, 9.) “ He
“ that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself
“ shame, and he that rebuketh a wicked man
“ getteth himself a blot; Reprove not a scorner
“ lest he hate thee, rebuke a wise man and he
“ will love thee; Give instruction to a wise
“ man, and he will be yet wiser, teach a just
“ man and he will increase in learning.” In our manner too of reproofing those whom it may be proper to reprove, we should still make a distinction of persons, and not treat all alike, but handle some more gently and some more severely as occasion requires. The same prescription will not suit all cases, but the medicines must be varied with the variety of distempers and constitutions. As St. Jude expresseth it, (Jude 22, 23.) “ Of some have
“ compassion making a difference, and others
“ save with fear, pulling them out of the fire,
“ hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.”
Neither should we be too forward to reprove upon every occasion, but only where the importance

portance of the case requires it. There are affairs of moment, wherein the interposition and remonstrance of a friend may be necessary : but to find fault for every trifle is abusing and prostituting reproof, renders it too cheap and common, and will sooner convince another of your peevishness and ill-nature than of his own error and misconduct. It will abate the weight and value of every thing that you say ; and being accustomed to find fault in lesser things, your opinion will not be so much regarded in matters of consequence. Reproving is taking a liberty that few people like ; you yourself perhaps would not be pleased with it from another ; and you should not therefore use this freedom but where you have sufficient reasons to bear you out, and where the greatness of the occasion may justify and excuse it. We ought not to think ourselves only in the right and others always in the wrong ; but should make favorable allowances for their humors and customs as well as our own. In the course of this world we must not expect to meet with every thing to please us ; many things and persons may chance to offend, which however are much better connived at than taken notice of, this being many times the only way of making them considerable. One would not immediately administer physic for every little ailment and disorder, for that would make a good constitution a bad one ; but only when there was real occasion for it, and then it would have the
better

better effect by being applied but seldom. And so reproof loseth its force and efficacy by being made too familiar ; the frequency of it lessens the dignity ; you must be more sparing of your censures, if you would have them more regarded ; exert them only upon great occasions, and they will have greater weight and authority.

You should also take care to reprove at proper *times* as well as upon proper occasions ; for there is a proper time and season for this as well as for every thing else, and for want of observing it the most wholesome advice may miscarry and have a bad effect instead of a good one. Men are not always equally in the humor to listen to advice ; the same admonitions which are ill received at one time may be well accepted at another ; and it is happy if we can catch them just in the temper, for generally more depends upon the disposition of the hearer than the ability of the speaker. One would not for instance admonish a man of his errors and miscarriages, when he was intoxicated with liquor, but rather wait a favorable opportunity, till he should come to himself and be capable of sober reflection. One would not pretend to advise a man in the height and fury of passion, for probably that would only provoke and inflame him more ; but rather take him in his cooler hours, when the whirlwind and the fire of passion were ceased, and the still small voice of reason might be heard. One would not upbraid a man with his faults before company,

for that would sooner exasperate than reclaim him; but rather lay open his wounds in private, where they may be probed and searched to the bottom with less offense, than they can only be touched, in public; and therefore when our Saviour (Matt. XVIII. 15.) delivers the precept, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee go and tell him his fault," he subjoins "go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone;" and afterwards if he refuse to hear, then we are to take other measures. If you would be successful therefore in your reproofs, or indeed in any thing else, you must be sure to watch the times and opportunities. The best good sense, like music, soundeth harsh and offensive, when out of time and tune. Unseasonable advice (Prov. XXVI. 1.) is "as snow in summer and as rain in harvest;" but as Solomon says (XV. 23.) "a word spoken in due season how good is it?"

As reproof is in itself a disagreeable thing to most persons, you should endeavor to render it as agreeable as you can by a pleasing *address* and behaviour. It is not so much what some people say, as their manner of saying it, that prejudices us against them; and we are shocked and offended at the reproof out of dislike to the reprover. A man of easy winning address may say almost any thing; and I do not know that physic is the less wholesome, and is certainly much better taken, for being made a little palatable and conveyed in some pleasant vehicle.

vehicle. It may be proper sometimes to mix praises with your reproofs, to commend a man for his good qualities at the same time that you blame him for his faults; and the sweetness and smoothness of the one will take off all the sharpness and eagerness of the other. It may be proper sometimes to hint your opinion rather than to dogmatize and be positive; to disguise the truth in fables and allegories similitudes and allusions rather than to speak it openly and bluntly, and so to steal and insinuate good advice into men before they are aware of it, and to please them even while you correct and instruct them. It may be proper sometimes to condescend to the manners, humors, and even weaknesses of others, to be grave where gravity is required and to laugh where ridicule will do better, and as the apostle says (1 Cor. IX. 22.) to become "all things to all men" in order "to save some." In most cases a soft rebuke is the most effectual. Reproof cuts the more for being genteel, as a razor carries the keener edge by being set in oil.

But let your address be what it will, you should however reprove in the *spirit of humility and meekness tenderness and compassion*. A pleasing address it is not in every one's power to acquire; but every one may if he pleases be kind and courteous, forgiving and pitiful to his offending brother. Look always upon men, as you choose to do upon pictures, in the best

and most commodious light, that you may see them to the greatest advantage. If a man's words and actions are capable of two constructions, put the most favorable upon them: and rather commend his good qualities, than aggravate his bad ones; rather pity than condemn him; rather throw a veil over his failings than expose them; and like the good Samaritan, "have compassion upon him, and bind up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine." Such a friendly monitor no reasonable person can be angry with, every prudent person would desire. It is such sort of treatment as we should expect from others, and what in common equity therefore we ought to practise ourselves. It is what the good psalmist earnestly wishes, (Psal. CXLI. 3.) "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil which shall not break my head." It is what the apostle presseth upon Christians by the rules of prudence and by the law of Christ; (Gal. VI. 2.) "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted; bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ."

But after all the rules and directions which can be given to this purpose, much must still be left to every one's prudence and discretion, both as to the discharge of this duty and as to

the manner of discharging it. It is a very nice and difficult province to reprove and advise judiciously and properly; but for our encouragement let us remember that we cannot perform any work more charitable to men or more acceptable to God, that is more useful and beneficial in this world, or will be more gloriously rewarded in the world to come; for (Dan. XII. 3.) "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

DISSERTATION XXIV.

Agur's wish.

NOTHING is more idle and extravagant than for the most part are mens wishes. When a man begins a sentence with *I wish*, it is great odds but he is going to utter some piece of folly. Our wishes may more properly be called our waking dreams. It is therefore a great secret in life to know how to wish, to know how to moderate our desires; and no wonder that among so many confessedly bad this good one of Agur hath been so much admired and celebrated in all ages. Who this

Agur was, we know no more than the title of the chapter (Prov. XXX.) informs us. We may presume, that he was a wise man among the Jews; and such he must have been esteemed, that his sayings were thought worthy to be added to the proverbs of Solomon, and they were added probably by the men of Hezekiah, who made the collection of proverbs from the 25th chapter inclusive. His sayings show him indeed to have been a wise man, and his wisdom appears no where more than in this his wish or prayer, which deserves to be written in characters of gold. (ver. 7, 8, 9.) "Two things have I required of thee, deny me them not before I die." The one concerns his spiritual estate, "Remove far from me vanity and lies." The other relates to his temporal condition, "Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me," or with "bread sufficient for me," it being usual with the Hebrews to express all provisions by the name of *bread*.

It must not be understood that he prayeth absolutely against poverty or riches, as if they were any thing sinful in themselves; for without doubt the blessing of God may attend both conditions, and there may be virtue cloathed in rags as well as seated on a throne: but he prayeth for a competency or middle estate rather than either of the extremes. Nor are there wanting instances of the like manner of speaking in other parts of scripture. When
it

it is said (Rom. IX. 13.) "Jacob have I loved
" but Esau have I hated," the meaning is not
that God really hated Esau, but he loved Jacob
better than Esau, he preferred the one to the
other. When it is said (Matt. IX. 13.) "I
" will have mercy and not sacrifice," the
meaning is not that God never required sa-
crifice, but he chose mercy rather than sacri-
fice, he was more pleased with the one than
the other. And so likewise when it is said
"Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed
" me with food convenient for me," the former
clause is not to be taken independent of the
latter, but both must be construed together,
and the meaning is Give me a competency,
"give me food convenient for me" rather than
"poverty" or "riches."

What is a competency, it is much easier for
every man to conceive, than perhaps for any
man to define; only it is not the same in all
ranks and conditions of life. For what is
sufficient for a single man, is not so for a man
with a family; and what may be superfluous
to a man in a private station, to a man in a
public capacity may be no more than necessary.
Let but a man's rank and condition be known,
and it is not hard to conceive what is a com-
petency for him, which is a thing much better
understood in particulars than explained in
generals.

This is the state that Agur prayeth for, and
preferreth not only to want but even to abun-
dance,

dance, and he doth not barely pray for it, but addeth withal his reasons. "Give me neither
 "poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me, lest" on the one hand "I
 "be full and deny thee and say Who is the
 "Lord? or lest" on the other "I be poor
 "and steal and take the name of my God in
 "vain." We see that his prayers for his temporal condition he still refers to his spiritual, and desires things or not as they conduce or not to this end, and in order to avoid sin is solicitous to avoid the occasions. He prayeth against *riches*, lest he should be tempted to luxury and irreligion, lest he "should be full
 "and deny the Lord;" and he prayeth against *poverty*, lest his necessities should make him
 "steal and take the name of his God in vain," first induce him to theft and then to perjury. For we must understand that it was a law and custom among the Jews, that whenever a man was charged with theft, and full proof could not be made, he was to clear himself by oath if he was not guilty, or if guilty he was to make restitution. A man of any religion would certainly rather confess and make restitution than incur the guilt of perjury: but to others of less ingenuous natures here was a ready door of communication opened between theft and perjury; and rather than plead guilty, rather than make restitution, they might be tempted to "take the name of God in vain:" and therefore Agur joineth both together, the
 one

one being so likely to produce the other, "lest I be poor and steal and take the name of my God in vain." The same law and custom indeed have not prevailed among us as among the Jews: but yet if we reflect how natural it is for one sin to draw on another, how apt men are when they have done wickedly to defend it with excuses, to guard it with lies, or if need be to deny it even with oaths and execrations, we shall conclude the reason of this request to be not only proper for the Jews in particular, but to be excellently adapted to the nature of mankind in general.

Agur's wish then is for a *competency* or *middle station* rather than *poverty* or *riches*; and though some men may pretend to be wiser and to have better notions of things than Agur, yet the reasonableness of this wish will evidently appear, if we consider first the temptations and dangers of *poverty*, particularly with a view to what Agur says, "lest I be poor and steal and take the name of my God in vain;" and if we consider secondly the temptations and dangers of *riches*, with a view still to what Agur says, "lest I be full and deny thee and say Who is the Lord?" and thirdly and lastly if we consider the security and advantages of a *competency* or *middle station*, "Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me."

1. There is the less need to be particular in setting forth the temptations and dangers of *poverty*,

poverty, because most men seem to be sensible enough of them by their endeavors to avoid them. Poverty appears dreadful in any shape; and men will "rise up early and late take rest and "eat the bread of carefulness," will do almost any thing and suffer almost any thing, to remedy or prevent it.

It is certain that poverty exposeth men to contempt, for who regardeth even merit in want? It is enough to depress the most rising genius, and to hinder it from soaring to any noble highths. As the satirist observes (1), They cannot easily emerge, whose virtues are cramped with narrow circumstances at home. As Solomon observes, (Eccles. IX. 16.) "The "poor man's wisdom is despised, and his "words are not heard." And contempt from the world is apt to beget spleen and contempt of the world again.

Poverty not only exposeth virtue to contempt, but what is worse, to temptation. It maketh men apt to repine and murmur at their own condition, and to malign and envy that of others; to tax God with partiality, and men with injustice. Uneasy with their condition, they are commonly impatient to mend it, and it is well if the best will make use of none but honest means to supply their necessities. Want and hunger are indeed powerful things; and who can live on despair or hoping even

(1) *Haud facile emergunt, quorum virtutibus obstat,
Res angusta domi.*

Juv.

even against hope? Alas! can you wonder if in such circumstances innocence is more easy to be seduced, and integrity more liable to be corrupted? Few people are so wicked as to do evil for the sake of evil; but their wants, real or imaginary, incite them. And necessity is seldom found to have any law, and putteth men upon those actions, which their nature would abhor if they were in easier circumstances. The devil understood this very well, when he said of Job in his affluence, (Job I. 9, 11.) "Doth Job fear God for nought?" He may well be obedient, who hath all that he can want, all that he can wish; but "put forth thy hand now, and" strip him of "all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face." A state of poverty and want is certainly the state of the greatest trial: and therefore our blessed Saviour, who was to be a pattern of all holiness, was born in poverty and lived in want, "having not so much as where to lay his head," (Luke IX. 58.) that he might exhibit the greater example of patience, and be made perfect through sufferings. And we may observe that the devil thought that the fittest opportunity of tempting him, while he was in want and hunger in the wilderness.

If poverty is a state of such temptation and danger, how can it be pretended, as the mendicant friars in the Church of Rome pretend, that it is a state of perfection? If providence seeth fit to lay the burden upon us, we do well indeed

indeed to bear it as patiently and chearfully as we can : but to impose it voluntarily upon ourselves, to profess it, to glory in it, who hath required this at our hands ? Religion no where enjoins it, nature disclaims it, and we see that Agur for very wise reasons prayeth against it. And what then shall we say of those men, who having all the advantages of birth and fortune might live not only free and independent, but flourishing and happy, and yet make themselves poor and necessitous, and sell their birthright like Esau, to support themselves in their luxury and extravagance ? somewhat like the prodigal in the parable, (Luke XV.) who "wasted his substance with riotous living," fed among the swine, and at last was willing to become as "one of the hired servants," to serve there where he might have commanded.

2. You cannot wonder indeed at Agur for praying against poverty ; you yourself would do the same : but still perhaps you may think it strange and unaccountable that he should pray against riches. You may think it natural for men to desire power and greatness ; and whenever they pretend to despise them, it is only because they are conscious to themselves, that they do not deserve them or cannot attain them. And yet if we will consider things seriously and calmly, riches will appear to have their temptations and dangers as well as poverty, and will be found really to be what they have been often called, *irritamenta malorum*, incentives

tives to vice, and *impedimenta virtutum*, clogs and hindrances to virtue.

It seemeth hardly possible to acquire great riches, and especially to acquire them in haste, with innocence. (Prov. XXVIII. 20.) "He that maketh haste to be rich," says Solomon, "shall not be innocent." "They that will be rich," says the apostle, (1 Tim. VI. 9, 10.) "fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition; for the love of money is the root of all evil."

And after riches are acquired, after "goods are increased, (Eccles. V. 11.) they are increased that eat them; and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?" Whatever else the rich and great may enjoy, they have little of the true enjoyment of life, little enjoyment of themselves. Their very privacies are public. Their times, their actions, and even their thoughts are hardly their own. And with all their state and greatness they are in a manner debarred from the freedoms and pleasures of true friendship. Friends to their fortune they have many; but alas, how few who are friends to their person! And what a sad situation is that, to be placed above the reach of advice, and for friendship to bear nothing but flattery!

As wealth exposeth the owners to the flattery of some, so likewise to the envy of others; as it maketh many false friends, so likewise many
real

real enemies: and many a man by growing rich hath only hastened his ruin; his greatness hath been made his crime, his estate his treason.

As it is dangerous to possess riches, so likewise is it difficult to know how to use them. For men are apt to value them too much or too little; to hoard with avarice or spend with profusion, according as our temper is, for they make the covetous more covetous, and the extravagant more extravagant.

Wealth is apt likewise to beget pride and sufficiency in the possessors. They are so happy in their fortunes, that they think little of improving their minds; and many a promising genius hath been spoiled, only by knowing that he was born to a good estate. Wealth is often found to taint our tempers as well as our understandings. There is a character that we express very well in English by the word *purse-proud*; and indeed riches are too apt to make men humorfome, and obstinately fond and conceited of their own ways and opinions, especially if their wealth is of their own acquiring. Feeling few of the wants and evils of life themselves, they have not the most tender sense and compassion for others; and it is to be feared, are oftener oppressive to their inferiors than charitable.

But what is the worst of all, they are as negligent of their duty to God as they are to men. God hath done the most for them of all mankind, and of all mankind they commonly do

do the least again for God. They seem little to think that increasing their talents is increasing their duty, the more they have received the more they are accountable, "to whom much is given, (Luke XII. 48.) of them much is required;" and by an odd kind of infatuation they are so taken up in enjoying the gifts, that they forget the giver, like as "Jehurum (Deut. XXXII. 15.) waxed fat and kicked, then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation." It is enough to cool all immoderate desires of growing rich, to consider what our Saviour hath declared of the danger of riches. (Luke VI. 24.) "Wo unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation." (Matt. XIX. 23, 24.) "Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven; and again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." And who then would be so pressing and eager after riches, when they do not so much accommodate our temporal condition, as indanger our eternal salvation?

These are some of the temptations and dangers attending poverty on the one hand and riches on the other. And you see even from these particulars what great reason we have to pray, as we are taught in our Litany, that "in all time of our tribulation" and "in all
" time

"time of our wealth," in the one as well as in the other, "God would please to deliver us." And therefore now thirdly and lastly we may proceed to consider the security and advantages of *a competency or middle station*, yet farther to evince and illustrate the reasonableness of Agur's wish, "Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me."

A middle station is the happiest of all conditions for the same reason that a temperate region is the best of all climates, as suffering none of the extremities of weather, and being neither burnt with heat nor starved with cold. A middle station is certainly the securest and freest from danger of every kind. Beasts and cattle browse upon the lowly shrubs, storms and tempests tear the lofty cedars; whereas what attains a moderate highth, standeth more secure, the storms roll over its head, the beasts lie at its feet.

As this state of life is more for one's security, so likewise is it more for one's health, living too high and living too low being both of them equally pernicious. And then one is placed just in the middle point below envy and above contempt: and as one is not envied himself, so neither has he any reason to envy others. For if one hath a competency, what can they enjoy more? they cannot more use the things of the world, they may more abuse them; and if they have greater riches, they have likewise greater

greater wants and greater demands for their riches; and perhaps upon occasion one may have as much ready money at command, as another of much superior estate and fortune.

As one is freer in this station than in any other from envying and being envied, so likewise from flattering and being flattered, from fearing and being feared, and from all those affections and passions which discompose and trouble human life. One lieth as it were safe at anchor in a commodious haven, where is all calm and neither winds nor waves can molest us. One liveth his own master, free and independent of the world; no man's slave, no man's prey; easy and indifferent about the course of events; observing and yet unobserved; without noise and hurry on the one hand, without solitude and neglect on the other; with neither too little attendance nor too much; for there may be so much as to be troublesome, and they who have the most servants and attendants, are not always the best served and attended.

And freer from cares, freer from perturbations and passions of every kind, one is more at leisure to enjoy himself and his own thoughts; and if one would leave any work of genius as a monument to posterity, this is the scene of life most proper, this the situation most favorable to such undertakings. Accordingly we may observe, that the world is most indebted in this kind to men of moderate fortunes. There have been few Solomons among princes,

and few Homers among beggars. Others are generally too idle or too busy, lazy rich or laboring poor; their pleasures or their necessities prevent them.

As one has more enjoyment of himself, so likewise of others, having more true friends and fewer enemies in this state of life than in any other. And one has this advantage, that he may keep as much or as little company almost as he pleaseth; may live more public if he will than his inferiors, and more private if he will than his superiors.

And what is principally to be regarded, in this station there is the least temptation, and the most virtue and religion. For I know not how, the rich are commonly above religion, and the poor are below it; there is generally the most devotion, the most truth and honesty to be found in persons of a middle condition.

In short this is the condition of life that hath been dignified with the title of the (2) *golden mean*; and whoever hath attained this, hath all that the world can give to make him happy, and may live free from all the inconveniences and all the vices of poverty and want in the one extreme and of satiety and abundance in the other.

The golden mean is not only the best for single persons, but likewise for societies, that the balance may be preserved among them.

(2) *Auream quisquis mediocritatem
Diligit, &c.*

Hor.

(3) ——— Vitiis

One would never wish to see any order of men grow too powerful. One would not have even kings so great as to be absolute, no more than subjects so free as to be licentious. And for the Church one would never wish it to be like Gideon's fleece, either to be wet with the dew of heaven while all is dry round about it, or while all is wet round about it that only to be dry. Its best friends ought not to wish the former, and I think its worst enemies can hardly wish the latter.

And now you see there is more reason in Agur's wish than perhaps at first you would have imagined. It is the very same thing that the apostle recommends, (1 Tim. VI. 6, &c.)

“ Godliness with contentment is great gain ;

“ for we brought nothing into this world, and

“ it is certain we can carry nothing out ; and

“ having food and raiment, let us be therewith

“ content.” It is the very same thing that

our Saviour teacheth us to pray for in that pe-

tition, “ Give us this day our daily bread ;”

bread, as we have observed, in the language of

the Hebrews signifying all the necessities of

life. Men wish and wish without end ; but if

we have enough what would we desire more ?

It is quite chimerical to expect any such thing

as perfect happiness here below ; the utmost

that we can hope for in this life is an easy pas-

sage. (3) No body is born without vices, no

(3) ——— *Vitiis nemo sine nascitur, optimus ille*

Qui minimis urgetur.

Hor.

body liveth without inconveniences; and as he is the best man who hath the least vices, so he is the happiest man who is subject to the least inconveniences. The greatest happiness in this world is ease, and the greatest riches are contentment. Every wise man therefore would pray in the spirit of Agur; O Lord God, author of my being and disposer of all events, what the world call fate and fortune, that I acknowledge all to be thy providence; and may I learn in all things to submit to thy dispensations, and think that condition of life best, which thine infinite wisdom seeth best to allot me. If thou givest me *riches*, give me still a religious and humble mind, that I may also be "rich in good works." If *poverty* must be my portion, still may I live honest though poor, and with patience endeavor to suit my wishes to my fortune, since I cannot my fortune to my wishes. But if thou blestest me with a *competency*, that is all I desire, then I shall think that "the lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground, yea that I have a goodly heritage." I ask not for greatness to gratify any pride or vice, but only for an independent easy fortune, that I may live in peace and die in comfort. O my God, all my requests are comprized in little, Make me easy here, and happy with thee hereafter. For thine is the disposal of both worlds; "thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen."

DISSERTATION XXV.

On public worship.

SOLOMON seemeth to have been the first who built a magnificent temple for the worship of the true God, being appointed to this work by God himself, and preferred before his father David: and no man therefore more proper or more able than he to give directions for our behaviour in such sacred places. This is what he undertakes in the former part of the fifth chapter of Ecclesiastes; and it behoves us to pay the greatest attention, as the subject here treated of is so very important, and the person who treateth of it the wisest of the sons of men. "Keep thy foot," saith he, "when thou goest to the house of God." The "house of God" is the place set apart for his worship and service; for though heaven is his throne and earth is his footstool, and he who filleth all places may as well be worshipped in one as in another, yet if not for the sake of God who inhabiteth immensity, however for the use and convenience of men, some particular places must be appointed for their assembling together, if they will assemble together to worship God at all. Such places the text intimates that it is our duty to frequent, and

directs how we are to behave, when we go there. "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God."

The customs and manners of men are so different in different ages and countries, that no wonder several phrases and expressions, easy and familiar enough in one age or country, can hardly be understood in another age or country. The phrase of "keeping our foot" or "feet" when we go to the house of God may sound strange to us who live in these western parts of the world, but to the inhabitants of the east nothing is more intelligible, it being an allusion to a ceremony in use among them from time immemorial to put off their shoes from their feet at their entrance into their places of worship. When God appeared unto Moses in the burning bush, he said unto him, (Exod. III. 5.) "Draw not nigh hither, put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." The like command was repeated to Joshua upon a like occasion, (Josh. XV. 15.) "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy, and Joshua did so." The Jews both ancient and modern have observed the same ceremony; and it is still in use among all the Mohammedans at this day. They never enter into their mosques without first uncovering their feet, as at our entrance into our churches we always uncover our heads. They, who measure every thing by their own rule,

rule, may perhaps think this an odd unaccountable ceremony; but however it is their way in the east of expressing their reverence of the supreme being; and from this practice the metaphor is evidently borrowed, and applied to the present occasion.

“Keep thy foot” therefore “when thou goest to the house of God” is as much as to say “Behave reverently when thou goest to the house of God,” the keeping of the foot being a token of reverence, and the first ceremony of religious worship in the east. And as our Saviour said (John XIII. 10.) “He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet but is clean every whit:” So this expression of “keeping our foot” comprehends all reverential behaviour, both internal and external, both of mind and body. There are then two things implied in the text, first that it is our duty to frequent the house of God, the place of his public worship; and secondly that we are obliged to behave with devotion and reverence upon such occasions. “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God.”

1. The words plainly suppose that it is our duty to frequent the house of God, the place of his public worship. All who allow that there is such a being as God, must allow that he is to be worshipped by us. He is our creator; and we are “the work of his hands.” He is our preserver and greatest benefactor; and we depend on him continually for “life

“and breath and all things.” We are blind and ignorant of futurity; he is of infinite wisdom to direct and dispose all events to our advantage. We are weak and indigent, unable of ourselves to satisfy or content ourselves; he is rich in mercies and mighty to save, of power equal to his goodness, and of goodness infinite as his power. In short he is the great judge of the world; and we are vile miserable sinners. The relation therefore between God and man plainly demonstrates the obligation and necessity that we are under to pay him all homage and adoration, to deplore our sins, to deprecate his judgments, to pray to him for his blessings, to praise him for his mercies; and it might with equal reason be asserted, that the whole is not greater than a part, as that man is not to worship God, the servant to acknowledge his lord, the creature to adore his creator.

It is then the duty of man to worship God, a duty arising both from the nature of man and the nature of God: neither will private adoration alone be sufficient, but we must also join in his public worship and service. For to what end was speech given to man? Was it only to serve our own necessity and convenience? Or was it not as well to show forth the praises of our maker? He who formed the tongue hath certainly the best right to the tribute of its praise and thanksgiving. If we were born dumb, we might still worship God with our heart in private; but the tongue is an instrument to show

show forth his praise in the congregation, and the power of doing it infers an obligation to do it. The psalmist very well understood this use of the tongue, and therefore in more places than one calleth his tongue his "glory," (Psal. LVII. 8, 9. CVIII. 1, 3.) and declares "I will praise thee O Lord among the people," "I will sing unto thee among the nations." One argument then for joining in public worship is drawn from our faculty of speech, which as it fitteth us for other offices of society, so qualifyeth us particularly for this.

Again. Man may be considered in two points of view, as an individual and as a member of society. As an individual, he may have his particular prayers and particular thanksgivings; but as a member of society, he is obliged to worship God in society. A society may be looked upon as one body, whereof different men are the different members. As members of the same body, they all partake of the same common blessings, they all share in the same common calamities; and the safety or danger of the whole is the safety or danger of the parts. As one body therefore they ought to make one common prayer, and join in one common worship. And the greater interests and concerns any one hath in the society, the more he is bound to wish and pray for its peace and welfare.

And if we are obliged to join in the public worship of God as men and members of society,

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we are certainly more obliged as Christians and members of the church. For the Christian religion tieth the bands of society straiter than ever they were before, and unites us more closely as members of the same body under the same head Christ Jesus. Communion is or ought to be the distinguishing characteristic of Christians. For this there are so many precepts, for this there are so many examples, in almost every page of the New Testament. For this our Saviour taught his disciples to pray not as single persons, but as a society of brethren, "Our Father, give us this day our daily bread, forgive us our trespasses," and so forth. For this partly the sacrament of the Lord's supper was instituted, and is therefore called the *communion* of his body and blood. And indeed for what did Christ come into the world, but to found and establish a church, and what is the church but a society of Christians joining in the same faith and worship, not an independent company without relation one to another, but one fold under one shepherd? If Christians therefore should "forfake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is," (Heb. X. 25.) they would be doubly criminal, they shall receive "greater damnation." They are not Christians, but rather apostates, who refuse to communicate with the church of Christ.

It is to be feared that there are many even among Christians, who know not how to pray
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of themselves for themselves, who are not able so much as to read the word of God, and how then shall they understand it? Now surely it is fitting, that there should some provision be made for such persons, that there should be some public places for them to resort to, where they may hear prayers read and the word of God explained. And indeed without public places and public forms of worship not only all religion, but all learning and humanity would be lost in the nation, and we should degenerate into greater savages than were our ancestors of old, when they had their Bards and their Druids, before ever the Romans came among them. For I believe it ever was and ever will be found true, that where is no established religion, there is no government no learning no humanity; and again on the reverse, where is government learning humanity, there is an established religion.

Even the places of public worship may have a good effect upon some men, strike an awe into their minds, and inspire them with greater reverence and devotion than perhaps they would feel in private. They may be seized with religious horror and admiration, in some measure as Jacob was after his vision of angels, when he said, (Gen. XXVIII. 17.) "How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

And

And if the place may have some effect, the solemnity of the service may make still greater impression, and the devotion of some may raise and inflame the devotion of others. They may catch the fire, one from another, as we read (1 Sam. XIX.) that even Saul among the prophets was seized with the spirit of prophecy.

Our prayers certainly are never more effectual, than when they are offered up to God in the congregation; as in a consort of music there is always something nobler than in any single voice or instrument. Our Saviour, no doubt, lendeth a gracious ear to the devout prayers of all his faithful servants; but he hath particularly engaged (Matt. XVIII. 20.) that "where two or three are gathered together in his name, there will he be also in the midst of them."

And as public worship is more for the benefit of men, so likewise is it more for the glory of God. As it is profitable to ourselves, it is also setting a good example to others: whereas by the neglect of this duty we certainly do ourselves no good but a great deal of hurt, and the example is of most pernicious influence, especially in those of high station: And God will resent it accordingly, for he hath expressly declared, (1 Sam. II. 30.) "Them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

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Nor is there only all the reason in the world for joining in the public worship of God, but also the practice of the best and wisest men in all ages. Are you greater and better than David? But how many psalms did he compose for the service of the sanctuary? and when absent, how passionately did he wish to be present at the place of God's worship? (Psal. XLII. 1, 2.) "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God: My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" (LXXXIV. 10.) "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand; I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Are you richer and wiser than Solomon? But he thought it the glory of his reign to build and dedicate a temple to God. The particular instances in the New Testament are too numerous to be quoted; but the general account of the first Christians is, (Acts II. 42.) that "they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers:" and again (ver. 46, 47.) "they continued daily with one accord in the temple, praising God and having favor with all the people." Joint worship is the duty and employment not only of men, but of angels; not only of the church militant in earth, but also triumphant in heaven: for
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there they are represented in the Revelation (V. 13.) as singing in consorts and companies
 “unto him that sitteth upon the throne and
 “unto the lamb for ever and ever.”

Thus I hope it fully appears that it is our duty to frequent the house of God, the place of his public worship. There is the less need therefore to be particular in the proof of what was asserted in the second place, that we are obliged to behave with devotion and reverence upon such occasions. For certainly if we are to assemble for the worship of God, we are to assemble with devotion and reverence; or otherwise it is not worship, but a profane mockery of the divine majesty, and an impious taking of his name in vain.

For consider the greatness and majesty of God, an infinite, eternal, all-wise, all-powerful, all-good, and all-perfect being; and one would think it impossible to address him without awe and reverence. It is natural to be under some awe and apprehension, when we come before our earthly superiors; and how then shall we appear in the more immediate presence of “the king of kings and lord of lords?”

As you consider his greatness, consider also your own vileness, and what are you that you should (Gen. XVIII. 27.) “take upon you to
 “speak unto the Lord who are but dust and
 “ashes?” The angels themselves cover their faces before him, and cry (Is. VI. 3.) “Holy,
 “holy,

“ holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory :” and how much more then should man who is a worm and nothing?

A decent external behaviour will cherish and improve our inward devotion; for the body reacteth upon the mind, as the mind acteth upon the body. The devotion of the heart will naturally show itself in suitable emotions of body, and suitable emotions of body will again assist the devotion of the heart.

A decent behaviour will have a good effect not only upon our own devotion, but also upon that of others, and engage them to “ go and do likewise.” When Christians are assembled together, worshipping their heavenly father, after an orderly manner in “ the beauty of holiness,” one may not improperly apply to them the words of the apostle; (1 Cor. XIV. 24. 25.) “ If there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all; and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.” An indecent behaviour in the public assembly is a breach of good manners as well as of religion, an affront to men as well as an offense to almighty God.

Nor are men only witnesses of our behaviour in the congregation of the faithful, but likewise angels; for which reason St. Paul (1 Cor. XI.

XI. 10.) is supposed to recommend a decent dress and demeanor to the Corinthians in their public assemblies "because of the angels." And if these heavenly spirits ever attend as guardians and ministers to men, one may reasonably presume that they do so particularly at such seasons and upon such occasions. He must have a narrow soul indeed, who cannot raise his conceptions above mere matter, and will believe nothing but what he sees.

But if we are not in the presence of angels, we are sure however that we are in the presence of God, who as he filleth the universe so delighteth especially in the hearts and temples dedicated to his honor and service. And he not only observes our outward behaviour, but is privy to the very thoughts and intents of our hearts: and what then doth it avail (Matt. XV. 8.) to "honor him with our lips when "our hearts are far from him?" (John IV. 24.) "God is a spirit, and they that worship him "must worship him in spirit and in truth." "O come" then (Psalm. XCV. 6.) "let us "worship and bow down, let us kneel before "the Lord our maker." If you are rich, you have the more reason to be thankful for the blessings which you enjoy above others. And yet commonly the rich and great are the most negligent of public worship, and God is least honored by those whom he has honored most. "Their sin" is indeed "exceeding sinful," for it is the worst of ingratitude added to irreligion;

ligion; and the more good things they have enjoyed in this world, the more evil things shall they suffer in the next. If you are poor, this is still the likeliest way to remove or ease your burden, to deliver you from it, or to make you contentedly bear it. Here high and low, rich and poor are all upon the level before their common creator; and though being poor you cannot "lay up for yourself treasure upon earth," (Matt. VI. 19.) yet here you may "lay up for yourself treasure in heaven."

No business can be a sufficient excuse for absenting yourself always. For what business can be of greater importance than to pay your duty and homage to your maker? what more necessary to be done, or more dangerous to be left undone? And do not think the short portion of your time thus employed employed to no purpose. For what is all your prudence and wisdom and policy, all your attendance and industry and labor, without the blessing of God to prosper them?

Nay though you are ever so moral in other respects, yet will not that be any excuse for your failure in this particular. The observance of the second table will never atone for the breaches of the first. The doing your duty to men will never make amends for the neglect of it to God. As religion without morality is vain, so certainly vain is morality without religion. Be careful first to discharge your duty to God, and then to men. That morality is

but a spurious sort of morality, which springeth from popular esteem, or fashion, or worldly interest, or any thing but religion.

In short there can be no just excuse for not frequenting the house of God, but an utter inability through want of health; and in such a case "mercy" may be better than "sacrifice." Other excuse there can be none, unless the public prayers and terms of communion are sinful. Let other churches vindicate their worship as they can, but the Liturgy of the church of England, though we cannot boast it indeed to be perfect as of divine inspiration, yet we may venture to say is no where exceeded or equalled by any human composition of the same kind since the days of the apostles.

A good form of prayer is not wanting to your devotion, let not your devotion be wanting to this good form of prayer. *Hoc age, da tibi, mind what you are about*, used to be proclaimed aloud at the Heathen sacrifices; and how much more is it our duty to be attentive, to be all ear, all devotion at the Christian sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving? Consider in what place you are, in whose more immediate presence you are, and for what end you are come or supposed to come hither; and it is strange that you can be so ceremonious and exact in paying your little civilities one to another, and at the same time so negligent of that greater reverence which you owe to the supreme being.

What have ye not houses to eat and to drink

in,

"in," said St. Paul, (1 Cor. XI. 22.) "or
"despise ye the church of God?" and in like
manner it may be said now, "What have ye
"not houses" to talk and to sleep in, "or
"despise ye the church of God?" This cer-
tainly (ver. 17.) "is coming together not for
"the better but for the worse." You may as
well not come at all as come and behave irreve-
rently. And not to come at all, however you
may gloss and excuse it, is really a sort of
practical atheism. It is an overtact of denial
of God's providence and government of the
world. It is in effect saying unto God, (Job
XXI. 14, 15.) "Depart from us, for we de-
"fire not the knowledge of thy ways. What
"is the Almighty that we should serve him?
"and what profit should we have if we pray
"unto him?" And whosoever shall thus "deny
"him before men," him will he also "deny
"before the angels in heaven." "Now con-
"sider this, ye that forget God," as God is
introduced saying by the psalmist, (Psal. L.
22, 23.) "lest I tear you in pieces, and there
"be none to deliver: Whoso offereth praise,
"glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his
"conversation aright will I show the salvation
"of God."

"O come then (Psal. XCV. 6, 7.) let us
"worship and bow down, let us kneel before
"the Lord our maker: For he is our God,
"and we are the people of his pasture and the
"sheep of his hand." "Honor and majesty

(Psal. XCVI. 6, 7, 8, 9.) "are before him,
 "strength and beauty are in his sanctuary:
 "Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the
 "people, give unto the Lord glory and strength:
 "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his
 "name: O worship the Lord in the beauty
 "of holiness." "Enter into his gates with
 "thanksgiving, (Psal. C. 4, 5.) and into his
 "courts with praise, be thankful unto him,
 "and bless his name: For the Lord is good,
 "his mercy is everlasting, and his truth en-
 "dureth to all generations."

DISSERTATION XXVI.

On dreams.

IT is a memorable saying of (1) an ancient
 sage, that every thing hath two handles,
 and you may either take it right or take it
 wrong, you may make a proper use, or be
 guilty of an unreasonable abuse of it. And
 this is verified as much perhaps in our *dreams*
 as in any thing else. Nothing hath admini-
 stered occasion to more weakness and supersti-
 tion;

(1) Παν πρᾶγμα δυο ἔχει λαβὰς. Epictetus.

(2) Prudent

tion; and at the same time, I conceive, there is scarce any thing that may be made the subject of more useful, more pious reflections.

It is said indeed that some persons sleep without dreaming, but such instances are exceeding rare, and it is much to be questioned whether there are any at all. For how is it possible for them to remember and be certain that they *did not* dream? It is highly probable they may forget that they *did*, for want of timely recollection, and through attention to the thoughts which rush in upon them and the various objects which surround them. Every body, I presume, is conscious of his dreaming more or less, and when he is awake cannot help sometimes reflecting a little upon such strange and surprising incidents; but the question is what are his reflections upon this occasion, and how are his waking thoughts employed about his sleeping ones.

The royal preacher hints both at the use and abuse of dreams in the following words (Eccles. V. 7.) "In the multitude of dreams
" and many words there are also divers vanities; but fear thou God:" Or as it may be translated better and nearer to the original,
"In the multitude of dreams both vanities
" and words are multiplied; but fear thou
" God." And we will pursue the same design, and enlarge upon the text, first by giving some instances of the *abuse* of dreams, and secondly by pointing out other more proper

uses to which they may be applied. "In the multitude of dreams both vanities and words are multiplied; but fear thou God."

I. The first and most principal instance of the *abuse* of dreams, because the most common, is the laying stress upon them in the conduct of life, and regarding them as significative of future events. For how are some people elated, when they have had as they think a propitious dream! and again how are they terrified and dejected, when they imagine it to portend some evil! To weak minds there is not a more fruitful source of horror and superstition. They would not undertake any thing of consequence for fear it should miscarry; and the visions of the night make them miserable all the day. And if any cross accident should intervene, though never so contrary to expectation, yet they reckon it all to this account, and conclude their dream to be fulfilled; they knew some misfortune would befall them, and their heart had boded as much before. Thus they confirm themselves in their superstition, and one imagined omen prepares and disposes them for the easier reception and belief of another.

"He that observeth the wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap," saith Solomon in another place; (Eccles. XI, 4) and the man who regardeth his dreams, observeth what is altogether as uncertain, and shall sow nothing but folly and
reap

reap the fruits of it. Not but some dreams may be so ordered as to be predictive of future events, and whoever can question it must deny the credibility of all history: but the examples are too few to create any rational assurance and dependence upon the event; and where it hath succeeded in one instance, it hath failed in millions. (2) What shall be hereafter, and how, and when, and where, God hath wisely wrapt in night from our search and discovery; and it is not easy to determin whether the folly or presumption is greater in short-sighted man to be prying into futurity. Be solicitous for nothing but to do your duty, and refer the issues and events of things to providence: and in this respect it may be said very properly, (Matt. VI. 34.) "Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself; sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

2. Another folly, near akin to the foregoing, and usually an attendant upon it, is the delighting to relate one's dreams in company, and to listen to the interpretation of others. And this abuse seemeth also to be particularly hinted at in the words of the text, "In the multitude of dreams both vanities and words are multiplied;" "words" are multiplied as well as "vanities," and they furnish idle people

(2) *Prodens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosa nocte premit Deus, &c.*

Hor.

N 4

(3) *Nihil*

people with matter for much idle discourse. But nothing is more tedious and irksome to persons of ingenuity than this sleepy conversation. Relate not therefore your dream to another, for though you may be delighted with telling it, yet a person of understanding can take no pleasure in hearing it. And what certainty can there be in the interpretation of dreams, when the general rule is that they go by contraries? Without doubt God may if he pleases inspire one man with a dream and another with the interpretation, but such instances belong to the age of miracles which hath ceased long ago. It is with our interpreters of dreams, as with all other fortune-tellers. It is merely by chance if they are in the right. There is all the moral certainty that they are in the wrong: and therefore we may say with the prophet, “ (Jer. XXIX. 8, 13.) “ Let not your
 “ diviners that be in the midst of you deceive
 “ you, neither hearken to your dreams, which
 “ ye cause to be dreamed; but ye shall seek
 “ me, saith the Lord, and find me, when ye
 “ shall search for me with all your heart.”

3. Because our dreams are for the most part so wild and extravagant, some men have therefore argued that rational thinking depends upon the body, and would thence infer the materiality of the soul. But here we must take care to distinguish. It may be true, that rational thinking doth depend upon a right disposition of body, but we must remember not as the
 cause

cause but only as the instrument. There may not be rational thinking without a right disposition of body, but a right disposition of body is not therefore the efficient cause of rational thinking. The body may hinder thought, but cannot effect it. The faculties of the soul like the light may be obscured and eclipsed by an interposing body; but remove the obstruction, and the light will shine out again in its full force and lustre.

4. As some men have argued from our dreams against an immaterial substance, others would infer from them that there is no material substance. Because the impressions made on our sensories are so strong when we are asleep, in the absence of the objects themselves, it is imagined that the case may be the same when we are awake, and there is no more reality in the one state than in the other; all is visionary in both. But such singular opinions are peculiar to philosophers, I may say to minute philosophers, and stand in need of none other refutation but barely to mention them. A man only of common sense could never think and argue after this manner. He must be ingenious in absurdity to deviate so much from the right road of thinking. And indeed, as (3) Cicero hath said, there is scarce any thing so monstrous and absurd, but some or other of the philosophers hath asserted it.

II.

(3) Nihil tam absurde dici aliquo philosopharum. Cic. de potest, quod non dicatur ab Divin. II. 58.

II. In this manner men deceive themselves and deceive others; and having given some instances of the *abuse* of dreams, we shall now proceed to point out other more proper *uses* to which they may be applied.

And first it is an inquiry worthy of a real philosopher to consider what may be the cause of dreaming, and what is the most probable and rational method of accounting for our visions. The subject is curious, if it be curiously handled: and either way, I believe, we may reap some advantage from it, whether we can or cannot complete the discovery, and give an adequate solution or not.

If we can discover the cause, we shall make a notable discovery indeed, we shall gratify a most natural curiosity, we shall accomplish what the ancients and our fathers have attempted in vain; and perhaps it may enable us to make farther discoveries, truths usually following in train, and one smoothing and opening the way for others. Now the causes, which have been assigned or may be assigned, are all perhaps reducible to these three, and in all probability it must be one or other of them; either the action of the body upon the soul, or of the soul upon the body, or of some other spirit upon both; and it may be worth our while to consider a little, which is the likeliest candidate, and approacheth nearest to the truth.

As to the action of the body upon the soul, who can conceive it possible, especially if he

hath in the least considered the passiveness inactivity and deadness of matter, that a *vis inertia* as it is called is necessary and essential to it, that it is entirely destitute of all powers, excepting only this one negative power, that every part of it will of itself always and necessarily continue in the same state, whether of rest or motion, wherein it is at present: And how can such a substance, howsoever compounded or decomposed, in any configuration or under any modification whatsoever, paint such lively pictures in the fancy, and represent not only the greatest variety of material objects, but even whole scenes of discourse and action? If our dreams were owing to the mechanism of the body, they would be like all other mechanical effects more constant and regular; but the irregularity and extravagance of them, if there was nothing else, are of themselves sufficient to refute all those who would account for them mechanically according to the laws of matter and motion. If they were occasioned by any traces left in the sensory, they would present us with nothing but what we had seen or thought of before, and the visions of the night would all consist of the ideas of the day; but we frequently see persons and things such as we never thought of before, nay such perhaps as never existed, and instead of dreaming always of what is past we dream sometimes of what is future and what afterwards happens accordingly.

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The action of the body upon the soul cannot possibly then be the cause of dreaming; more probably it is the action of the soul upon the body. But how can the soul act in this wonderful manner, and yet not be conscious that her own operations are her own operations? how can she raise so many phantoms without being in the least sensible that they are of her raising? Others are actors in our dreams as well as ourselves; and how can she mistake her own suggestions for the discourse and actions of others? The soul is passive and suffers as much upon occasion when we are asleep as when we are awake; and how can she at the very same time and in the very same instance be both agent and patient, act upon herself and suffer from herself, and yet be not at all conscious of either?

Are not these seeming impossibilities? and must we not then look out for some other cause? and what other cause can we devise or imagin so probable as the action of some other spirit upon the soul or sensory while we are asleep? All other ways the thing seemeth impossible; this way it is possible, though liable indeed to inexplicable difficulties and invincible objections. It may seem strange that our dreams, if owing at all to the influence of other spirits, should not be more coherent and rational than they usually are. But we have no manner of notion how many different degrees and species there are of spirits in the universe,

universe. It is reasonable to believe, that there is an infinitely greater variety of immaterial beings than of material, and that the universe is fuller of spirit than of matter. As we can by no means comprehend the number and diversity of spiritual beings, so much less can we have any conception of all their powers and faculties, of all their ways and manners of acting. How do we know but the irregularity of our dreams may proceed from the indisposition of the organ rather than from the imperfection of the agent, from some obstruction in the brain or sensory rather than from any incapacity in the spirit at that time acting upon the sensory? Or if we could not solve all the difficulties of this hypothesis which however is possible, yet should we not prefer it to any other hypothesis which is plainly impossible? There are inexplicable difficulties in almost every other part of physics; but rather than admit difficulties, shall we believe impossibilities?

But this hypothesis, you may imagine, will encourage superstition rather than cure it: but if it be true, truth can never by any legitimate consequence beget superstition; and can there be any question whether we shall be more superstitious in referring these appearances to spiritual agents, or to chance which is only a name and the powers of matter which are nothing? It is certain the philosophy of this age attributes too much to matter and the powers of matter, and too little to spirit; whereas in reality

reality the one is never more than an instrument, the other is always the agent. The principle of gravitation itself, answering as is very well known not to the surface of bodies but to their solid content, cannot possibly be accounted for by any action of matter upon matter, but must of necessity be resolved into some immaterial cause, that penetrates the inmost substances of things, and exerts a power of which matter is altogether incapable: and if even matter cannot act upon matter without the agency of some spiritual being, why should we think it strange to have recourse to such a cause for the production of so much more extraordinary effects as dreams and visions? There is many a one, I believe, who some time or other in his life hath dreamed of something happening to him, that hath made a most surprising impression upon him; and the thing hath happened afterwards in the very same manner and with the very same circumstances as in his dream. And have not such dreams confessedly something of *divine* in them, and do they not plainly declare a spiritual original? and shall we ascribe some to spiritual and some to material causes? or shall we not rather be more consistent with ourselves, and suppose that good spirits may inspire some as evil spirits may excite others?

It is a sentiment as old (4) Homer that dreams are from Jupiter: and the best and wisest authors

(4) ——— *ὄντας ἐκ Διὸς*, 1519. Il. I. 63.

authors of antiquity speak the same language. Nay what is more, the scriptures themselves, the oracles of truth, speak always of dreams and visions as proceeding from God immediately or mediately, by his inspiration or by the agency of angels and spirits through his permission: and the worse sort of dreams is expressly attributed to the same cause as well as the better. Hear how holy Job complains in the bitterness of his soul, (VII. 13, 14.) "When I say my bed shall comfort me, my
"couch shall ease my complaint; then thou
"scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me
"through visions." And some spiritual agents are confessedly the cause of some dreams, is it not most probable that other spiritual agents are the cause or occasion of others? And if one sufficient cause is investigated, why should we not rest contented, why look out for others? These things are humbly offered by no means as a certain, but only as a probable solution of the difficulty; by no means as infallible truths, but only as reasonable conjectures in a dark and intricate subject, which deserves farther consideration.

But if we find after all, that we cannot discover the cause of dreaming, and that we know too little of the nature of the soul and of its union with the body to be able to account for our visions; we may however learn modesty and humility, and be convinced that our understandings are very unequal and very imperfect measures

measures of truth ; that things may be, though we cannot tell how they be ; that therefore we may reasonably believe the mysteries of religion which yet we cannot explain ; that sleeping as well as waking we are a mystery to ourselves ; that it is no objection against the immateriality of the soul because we cannot account for the union of an immaterial being with a material, for we cannot even account for our own dreams ; that it is no argument against a future state because we cannot conceive how the soul will act when the body is dead, for we cannot even conceive how the soul acteth and is acted upon while the body is only asleep ; that the works of God are unsearchable, and (Ecclus XVIII. 7.) “ when
 “ a man hath done then he beginneth, and
 “ when he leaveth off then he shall be doubtful.” (Psal. CXXXIX 6.) “ Such knowledge is too wonderful for us ; it is high, we
 “ cannot attain unto it.”

2. Our dreams may be of excellent use in another respect, forasmuch as by them we may in some measure learn what is our natural disposition and temper. Our visions frequently take a tincture from our thoughts and passions. What is uppermost in our minds by day, that is often the matter whereof our dreams are made up at night. And if we will but observe them properly, the general tenor of them may help us to discover our general bent and inclination, whether we are ambitious, or
 whether

whether we are libidinous, or whether we are revengeful, or what is the ruling passion of our souls. All artifice, all disguise is then laid aside; and the man appears in his natural and genuin colors. And by these means the time that is taken up in sleep will not be entirely lost, but we shall improve in the most useful knowlege, the knowlege of ourselves.

3. Our dreams may be of farther use and advantage, as they may furnish us with no inconsiderable arguments for the immateriality and immortality of our souls. It is commonly said that sleep is the brother and image of death; and in one respect indeed it is so, a token of the mortality of the body, but a pledge of the immortality of the soul. For it is very evident, that the soul is in great measure independent of the body, even while she is within the body, since the deepest sleep that possesseth the one cannot affect the other; and while the avenues of the body are all locked up and closed, the soul is still indued with sense and perception, and the impressions are often stronger, and the images more lively, when we are asleep than when we are awake. They must necessarily be two distinct and different substances, whose natures and properties, whose constitutions and conditions are so very different, that while the one shall sink under the burden and fatigue of the day, the other shall still be fresh and active as the flame; while the one shall stand in need of such fre-

quent repairs, and cannot subsist without its due returns of rest, the other shall disdain all rest, want no restoratives, and yet be sensible of no decay; while the one shall lie little better than a carcass dead to the world and buried in sleep, the other shall then enter upon new scenes, and be ranging in thought through the universe. And why then should the death of the one be any more the death of the other, than the sleep of the one is the sleep of the other? since the soul can think and act in this manner without the body, even while she is joined to the body, why should she not be able to think and act in a more enlarged and more exalted manner, when she shall be separated from the body, or united to a spiritual body that shall no longer hinder her operations? Since the soul hath her distinct joys and sorrows, pleasures and pains, while the body is senseless and asleep, why should she not be capable of the same also, when the body shall be no more? and since the sensations and affections are usually stronger in sleep, when the soul hath less to do with the body, why should they not be stronger still after death, when the soul shall have nothing to do with the body at all, when (1 Cor. XV. 54.) “this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality?”

4. And for the conclusion of all, “Fear God. In the multitude of dreams both vanities and words are multiplied, but fear

6

“thou

“ thou God. He is about thy path, and about
“ thy bed, and spyeth out all thy ways.” He
hath an absolute power over thy soul, and can
either ravish thee with the most pleasing images,
or torment thee with the most terrible visions;
and if there was none other heaven or hell,
could constitute one in thine own bosom. Re-
vere therefore his power, and trust in his mercy.
Beware of sinning against him, as thou wouldst
live easily and sleep securely. A guilty con-
science will haunt thee upon thy bed worse
than ghosts and specters; and the sleep which
should refresh thee, will distract thee, and thy
very rest will be weariness. Live a life of so-
briety and temperance, and thy sleep will be
sweet. Broken rest and frightful dreams are
often occasioned through fulness and indi-
gestion. And sleeping as well as waking com-
mend thyself to God; and by day he will di-
rect thee, by night he will protect thee, and
bid his angels watch over thee that nothing
shall approach to hurt thee. When thou liest
down, pray to God and say (Psal. IV. 9.) “ I
“ will lay me down in peace and take my rest,
“ for it is thou Lord only that makest me to
“ dwell in safety.” When thou risest up, give
thanks and say (Psal. III. 5.) “ I laid me down,
“ and slept, and rose up again, for the Lord
“ sustained me.” By no means be supersti-
tious, but yet be religious; and in all events
be ready to profess with the good psalmist,
(XXX. 7.) “ I have hated them that hold of

“superstitious vanities, but my trust hath been
 “in the Lord:” Or as the son of Sirach hath
 expressed the same sentiment more at large,
 (Ecclus XXXIV. 1, &c.) “The hopes of a
 “man void of understanding are vain and false,
 “and dreams lift up fools: Whoso regardeth
 “dreams is like him that catcheth at a sha-
 “dow, and followeth after the wind: If they
 “be not sent from the most High in thy visi-
 “tation, set not thy heart upon them: For
 “dreams have deceived many, and they have
 “failed that put their trust in them: The law
 “shall be found perfect without lies, and
 “wisdom is perfection to a faithful mouth:
 “The spirit of those that fear the Lord shall
 “live, for their hope is in him that saveth
 “them.”

The foregoing discourse was composed soon
 after the reading of Mr. Baxter's excellent
 book intitled *An inquiry into the nature of
 the human soul*, wherein the phenomenon of
 dreaming is explained more at large, as well
 as several other abstruse and difficult points
 of natural philosophy, with the greatest clear-
 ness of reason and strength of argument.

DISSERTATION XXVII.

On the abuse of names and words.

AS all things are liable to be corrupted and abused, and the corruption of the best is always the worst; so nothing perhaps is capable of doing more good, and at the same time hath been perverted to do more harm, than the faculty of *speech* and *language*. I do not mean only when this noble faculty is prostituted and profaned in blasphemy, swearing, lying, or any irreligious and wicked discourse, or any indecent and foolish conversation; but it may be abused, and often is abused in various other ways and manners to the great loss of time and exercise of the hearer's patience.

A needless profusion of language is itself a manifest abuse, and let it be ever so innocent, yet to persons of understanding at least it must be tedious, as it is impertinent. How many impose upon others, and very often upon themselves, by false points of wit, similes and metaphors, tropes and figures, and mislead the judgment by dazzling the imagination! How many affect to make use of hard words, without any clear and determinate ideas, or even with none at all, neither understanding themselves and confounding others! How many are

exceeding unsteddy in their application of names and words, now use them in one signification and then in another, as best promotes their present purpose and occasion! How many are obscure and equivocal in their phrases and expressions, have still some secret meaning in reserve, and if exception be taken at their words in one sense, can easily explain them in another! and by these means disputes are increased, and controversies become endless, but knowledge instead of being advanced is buried under the rubbish of books and words.

But of all the abuses of language none perhaps is more notorious, or more fruitful of fatal consequences, than that specified and reprehended by Isaiah, "the calling of evil good and good evil." (Isa. V. 20, 23.) "Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil, that put darkness for light and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter: Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him." And we will first give some instances of this abuse and misapplication of names and words; and secondly endeavor to show the great wickedness and mischievous effects of it, which deserve a woe to be pronounced against it. "Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil."

I. We will give some instances of this abuse and misapplication of names and words. The text is by commentators, I think, generally under-

understood of judicial proceedings; and it is certain that an advocate's pleading to varnish over and vindicate guilt, and to disguise and suppress the truth, and a judge's regarding the persons of men more than the justness of the cause, and giving an iniquitous sentence out of hatred or affection, is really and truly "calling evil good, and good evil, justifying the wicked for reward, and taking away the righteousness of the righteous from him." But there is no necessity for restraining the text to a particular sense, when it will as well admit of a more general interpretation.

All who by their writings or discourses or practices endeavor to confound the nature of virtue and vice, and to lessen our reverence of the one, our horror of the other, may very properly be charged with "calling evil good and good evil;" whether they deny the eternal and essential difference of right and wrong, just and unjust, and resolve it all into the effects of prejudice and education, or derive it wholly from the force and influence of fashion and custom, or ascribe it to the power of the Leviathan, the governing power, that constitutes the lawfulness or unlawfulness of things by enacting or forbidding them: or whether they plead the expedience and necessity of some crimes, and maintain that private vices are public benefits; or pervert their wit and satire to ridicule and misrepresent what is virtuous and praise-worthy, and exhibit a vicious character as the fa-

vorite character with all possible circumstances to render it agreeable: or whether they pretend godliness to sanctify iniquity, make a market of pardons and indulgences, substitute superstitious rites and ceremonies in the room of true piety and virtue, reconcile the hopes of heaven with a wicked life, and instruct men how near they may approach unto sin without sinning, threaten damnation to the most virtuous of another communion, and promise salvation to the most vicious of their own.

Some virtues border very nearly upon some vices, and like different colors in painting run into one another, so that it is extremely difficult to say exactly where is the end of one and beginning of another; and here therefore men may easily mistake, especially if they will mistake wilfully; and our friends and flatterers have some opportunity to embellish and represent things better, and our enemies and revilers may take occasion to blacken and represent matters worse, than they are in reality. Courage and rashness, cowardice and meekness, generosity and extravagance, frugality and covetousness, pride and magnanimity, humility and meanness, dulness and gravity, cunning and wisdom, zeal and bigotry, lukewarmness and moderation, religion and superstition, how frequently have they been confounded, and the one mistaken and misapplied for the other!

Above all when men are heated and inflamed by party, whether in church or state, how apt are they to throw out names and characters at random, think no sort of language too opprobrious for those who differ from them, or too honorable for those who concur with them, vilify even the virtues of the former, and dignify the very vices of the latter.

How hath almost every little sect of Christians appropriated to itself the denomination of *the Church of Christ*; and a part only, and the most corrupt part of it, claimed the title of the whole, and been proudly stiled *the catholic Church*! How have the names of *heretic* and *schismatic* been banded to and fro among Christians of different communities and persuasions; and some of the very best men, lovers of truth and servants of the God of truth, been so stigmatized by some of the very worst, pretended champions for religion, but really an offense and scandal to it! How have some of the most eminent men, whom the Church of England ever bred, and who have signalized themselves most by their immortal writings against popery, been branded notwithstanding with the odious appellation of *papists*! and how have some again arrogated to themselves the merit of being the only true *protestants*, when they are in reality the tools and instruments of papists, and (whether they understand it or not) the greatest factors and abettors of popery! If a man happens to be a little

little more religious than ordinary, how is he presently traduced under the character of *enthusiast*, *madman*, and what not! and on the other side how often have the most extravagant rants of enthusiasm, and rhapsodies of nonsense and blasphemy, been esteemed *the only edifying preaching*, and the preachers said to be *moved by the Holy Ghost!*

Nothing is more common than for *faction* and *sedition* to wear the dress and assume the name of *patriotism* and *public spirit*; and again, for *public spirit* and *patriotism* to be ridiculed and exploded under the notion of *sedition* and *faction*. *Prerogative* is often but another word for *usurpation*, and *liberty* only a more popular name for *licentiousness*. It is certain that *republicanism* is not *anarchy* and *confusion*, neither is all *monarchy* *tyranny* and *arbitrary power*; but yet the men of different principles will so misrepresent and miscall both the one and the other. In short any thing may be made any thing, qualities and persons change their names, black shall be white, and white shall become black, a Cato shall be decried as a Cataline and a Cataline extolled as a Cato, if the voice of prejudice so pleases.

A man of pleasure, as he is commonly called, is he really a man of pleasure, or can there be any true solid lasting pleasure without religion and virtue? Consider the pains he taketh in his unlawful pursuits; how vast his expectations are before, and how little his satisfaction

tion after enjoyment; how he generally loses his reputation, ruins his fortune, destroys the health of his body, confounds the peace of his mind; and then consider whether this is not more a life of pain than of pleasure, of pain here and misery hereafter.

Can any appellation be more glorious than *a man of honor*? but how is the best of names debased and applied to the worst of persons? *A man of honor* in the modern phrase is one who boldly asserts that he is so, and will cut any man's throat who shall dare to question it. *A man of honor* is above paying his tradesmen's bills and satisfying his just and legal creditors; he will plead privilege or any thing rather than be punctual and honest; the only debts which he ever discharges are what are called his *debts of honor*. *A man of honor* will swear and forswear, talk big things and act little ones, do an injury but forgive none, and with an implacable hatred pursue an innocent man to death for such things, as it would be a greater victory, a nobler triumph to overlook and pardon. So far is he from acting with honor, that he doth not even act with common honesty; and certainly honor is the strictness, the nicety, the punctilio of honesty, the flower, the quintessence, the perfection of virtue, or as we say, heroic virtue.

The word *orthodox* you seldom hear mentioned in conversation without a manifest sneer; but is there any thing then really ridiculous in *orthodoxy*?

orthodoxy? or on the contrary is it not much to be valued and desired, if there is any thing valuable and desirable in what the word properly signifies, *right sentiments and opinions*? But in a loose and licentious age, when some men can glory in being thought heretics, no wonder that others are ridiculed for being orthodox.

What can be worse in sound than the word *free-thinker*, as it is commonly applied, and better in its original signification? To think freely is both our privilege and our duty, the dignity and excellence of our nature; but can they with any propriety of speech be called *free-thinkers*, who think in the most slavish abject manner, have souls hardly elevated above matter, and as they generally live like the beasts, entertain no greater hopes and expectations than that they shall also die like them? Let them for shame renounce the title of *free-thinking*, when their fault is want of thinking. It is not superior thought and reason that directs and influences them, but superior lust and passion.

II. Several other instances might be assigned of this abuse and misapplication of names and words, but these are sufficient to explain the nature of the sin here censured, "the calling
" of evil good and good evil:" and therefore now secondly we will endeavor to show the great wickedness and mischievous effects of it, which

which deserve a woe to be pronounced against it, "Woe unto them that call evil good and
"good evil."

It is manifestly perverting the use and intent of speech, and is the most dangerous sort of lying and falsehood. (1) *Verba valent ut nummi*, words obtain their currency like money, and such an abuse and misapplication of words is as if one should endeavor to put off his counters for gold, only with this difference, that no body will take our false money, but others may easily be deceived by our false language, and we very often deceive ourselves. Such and such words are by constant usage made and agreed upon as it were to be the signs of such and such ideas, and to apply them otherwise, to denominate "evil good and
"good evil" is plainly to frustrate and defeat the end of language, to spoil and abuse the great instrument of society intercourse and correspondence among men. It must be strange depravity considered in any light, betrays most gross ignorance indeed if done ignorantly, and if done knowingly argues as great wickedness.

But neither is this the most material objection to it; for it is not only perverting language and abusing words, but what is still more unpardonable, perverting nature, and confounding as much as in us lieth the eternal differences of things. Moral good and
evil

(1) Horace.

(2) Amicus

evil are as evidently distinguished as natural good and evil; and I know not whether the absurdity is not greater, as well as the consequences more fatal, of confounding the former than the latter. The prophet intimates that "the calling evil good and good evil" is altogether as unnatural and monstrous as "putting darkness for light and light for darkness, bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter." He would be reckoned guilty of murder, who should administer poison for physic; and would his crime be less, who should recommend vice for virtue? That could only destroy the body, but this would ruin the soul.

Consider what is generally the occasion of this abuse and misapplication of names and words. I am afraid that it proceeds always from evil, men hoping by these means to keep their vices in countenance, and possibly to render them even fashionable. Virtue is nearly related to truth, it is really truth of action, and standeth in need of no paint and disguise, but appears to the greatest advantage in its own native colors; the plainest words become it best, and those who represent it truest commend it most. But vice cannot subsist without artifice and falsehood, fictitious ornaments must hide its real deformity, it cannot bear to be described or spoken of in its proper characters; but softer appellations must be given it, modish phrases invented, and artful names contrived to lessen the horror of the thing. It is

a cer-

a certain sign that men are not very virtuous themselves, when they ridicule and misrepresent the virtues of others; and would they speak favorably of vice, and call *debauchery* for instance only *gallantry*, *gaming* only *play*, *drunkenness* and *gluttony* *good-living*, and the like, unless they were favorably inclined to those vices themselves? The fashion may draw in others afterwards to speak the same language, but it proceeds originally from evil. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" (Matt. XII. 34.) and as we discover the genius and character of particular persons by their discourse, so we may learn the genius and character of the age in general from the current language of the times. In a sober and virtuous age, there is always a modesty and decency, a dignity and virtue in their speeches as well as in their actions; but in an immoral and irreligious age, a certain levity of discourse prevails, public virtues are ridiculed, and private vices are defended, and the same looseness and licentiousness reign equally in their life and conversation.

As this abuse of language proceeds always from evil, so it conduces always to evil, and is the fruitful source of most of the mischief and wickedness in the world. It is almost impossible to conceive the great force of words to do either good or harm. Men may be led by a whistle like beasts, and are often governed more by sound than by sense, by words than by things,

things. Cæsar quieted a mutiny in his army by a single word, by calling them *citizens* instead of soldiers; and how often have we known a single word inflame a whole multitude, and a nick-name render even the best of persons and the best of things ridiculous and odious?

What are half of the controversies which are so hotly agitated in the learned world, but disputes about words? and if they would only define their terms, and constantly affix the same ideas to the same words, what a saving would it be of time and trouble, and how much idle anger and altercation might be prevented?

How much have the peace and honor of the nation suffered from names and words through the folly and madness of many for the gain and service of a few? The word is often given out among parties, as it is in armies: and the word *shibboleth* (Judg. XII.) was not more destructive to the Ephraimites of old, than some others have been in the fatal divisions of our own people. And how have their ghosts continued to haunt and divide us still; and party-names and distinctions been kept alive, when the things signified by them have died long ago; and honest men been made to think that they differed, when they really agreed, and equally wished the good of their king and country?

What

What is flattery but "calling evil good," and what is scandal but "calling good evil?" and how many have been betrayed and pleased to their ruin by the one, how many again have been stung to the heart and made miserable by the other? If you will observe it, most of the sin and wickedness in the world is derived from the same source. Men do not forsake good *as* good, and commit evil *as* evil; but others represent things to them, or they represent them to themselves, in false lights, good as evil and evil as good. Their lusts and passions blind the eyes of their minds; and no one was ever drawn into sin, but he was first deceived with the promise of some advantage, the prospect of some pleasure or other. It hath been with mankind ever since, as it was with our first parents in the beginning. They were deluded by empty words, they were flattered that they should be "as gods knowing good and evil;" and while they promised themselves happiness, they forfeited paradise, and entailed death upon themselves and their posterity.

It is really the highest point of wickedness to recommend vice for virtue, and to decry virtue for vice. Many men can do what yet they cannot speak; and it is easier to them to commit villany than to commend it. At least the next step to confounding good and evil in discourse is confounding them in practice, and he who hath effrontery enough to do the one, will hardly refrain from the other.

You have heard several instances of this abuse and misapplication of names and words; you have seen the great wickedness and mischievous effects of it; which deserve a woe to be pronounced against it, "Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil." And now therefore for the conclusion of all, let us determine to reverence truth; adhere to it religiously, inviolably in every thing that we say; and honestly and resolutely call good good and evil evil. Let no favor or affection engage us, let no hatred or enmity provoke us, to "call evil good and good evil." (2) This man may be a friend, and that man may be a friend, but the dearest friend of all ought to be truth.

And as we should not ourselves be guilty of "calling evil good and good evil;" so neither let us be the occasion of it in others, but live always agreeably to our calling, and act according to the names and titles whereby we are dignified and distinguished. What a shame would it be, if they who are intitled *honorable* and *right honorable*, should in any instance act *dishonorably* and below their quality! What a scandal would it be, if they who are denominated *worshipful* and *reverend*, should at any time act *irreverently*, and by their actions forfeit the respect due to their characters! Would it not be a manifest contradiction in terms for his *grace* to be *graceless*? Would titles be any longer marks of respect and honor, if men

(2) Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica Veritas.

should

should cease to live answerably to them; or rather would they not become a mockery and insult upon them; and could any sarcasm be bitterer, any ridicule be stronger, than to call a notorious sinner *worshipful*, or a professed libertine *right honorable*?

We are all of us called *Christians*, and let us be sure to live worthy of that holy name. What inconsistency would it be to be pious in profession and impious in practice, to call ourselves *Christians*, and yet at the same time to live like *Jews* and *Heathens*? “I beseech you” therefore “brethren, (Eph. IV. 1.) that ye walk “worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are “called.” (2 Tim. II. 19.) “Let every one “that nameth the name of Christ depart from “iniquity.” (1 Pet. I. 15.) “As he who “hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all “manner of conversation.”

DISSERTATION XXVIII.

On modesty and shame.

NOTHING is more evident than that the manners of men are different in different times. Some ages, as well as some persons, are more virtuous or vicious than others.

Now in loose and licentious times a man may be almost ashamed to recommend shame and modesty. They are looked upon by too many persons as very unfashionable awkward qualities, are reckoned to betray strange want of breeding, to proceed from utter ignorance of the world, and are so far from being any recommendation of a man, that usually they are very great obstacles to his success. For men seldom get any thing by modesty and merit; they oftener succeed by assurance and importunity; and impudence, though it is no virtue, yet is commonly found to beggar them all.

But there have been times, when another spirit prevailed, and the greatest charm was simplicity of manners, when modesty and reserve were a better recommendation than boldness and confidence, when shame was a more powerful restraint than all the penalties and sanctions of laws, and preferment instead of being courted was offered to the best and most deserving. And however we may think ourselves improved in politeness, yet the prophet Jeremiah accounts shameflessness a great want of virtue and a great aggravation of vice, and layeth such stress upon it that he repeats it in two chapters. (VI. 15.) “ Were they ashamed
“ when they had committed abomination? nay
“ they were not at all ashamed, neither could
“ they blush: therefore they shall fall among
“ them that fall: at the time that I visit them,
“ they shall be cast down, saith the Lord.”

And again (VIII. 12.) “ Were they ashamed
“ when they had committed abomination? nay
“ they were not at all ashamed, neither could
“ they blush: therefore shall they fall among
“ them that fall: in the time of their visita-
“ tion they shall be cast down saith the Lord.
“ I will surely consume them, saith the Lord.”

Not that all modesty is good; there is in this as in most other cases a right and a wrong, and it may deserve censure as well as merit praise. As the son of Sirach saith, (IV. 21.) “ there
“ is a shame that bringeth sin, and there is a
“ shame which is glory and grace.” Some men are ashamed even of their virtue, and others can glory in their very impieties and vices. And therefore in the handling of this subject it may be proper to consider in the first place the nature end and use of modesty and shame in general, and then to show more particularly in the second place what things we should not be ashamed of, and of what we should be ashamed, though perhaps the rest of the world may glory in them.

I. We will consider in the first place the nature end and use of modesty and shame in general. If we would make any distinction between them, modesty may be considered as the cause and foundation of shame, and shame as the effect and consequence of modesty. The one is habitual, a fixed principle and disposition of mind; the other is only occasional, and what we feel and experience upon the commis-

sion of such and such actions. Modesty refers more to what is future, and shame to what is already past. The one is rather a check and restraint upon us before we attempt any evil, the other is an uneasy sensation and painful reflection after we have been guilty of some immorality or indecency. But there is no need always thus nicely to distinguish them, and we shall ourselves perhaps use them indiscriminately in the following discourse; for indeed it is much easier to distinguish them in idea, than to separate them in fact and reality. There can be no shame without some modesty any more than there can be modesty without some shame; and a man must be destitute of neither or of both.

Now that a sense of modesty and shame is wrought and woven into our frame and constitution, all mankind must see in others, and experience in themselves. Our spirits immediately take the alarm, our limbs tremble, our speech falters, our hearts beat, our blood flieth up into our faces, we are overwhelmed with confusion, and cannot prevent or help it. There is no commanding down a blush, and bidding the heart be still; the more modest and ingenuous earnestly wish it, but wish in vain; the more they strive against it, the more it prevails; the fear of it often produces it; and the more hardened and consummate in impudence cannot always hold out against it, but whether they

they will or not must be ashamed and confounded upon some occasions.

For what reason then was this sort of instinct implanted in our nature? Was it not evidently for a preservative and guard of virtue, to withhold us from committing any indecency, to restrain us from contracting any guilt, and to make us uneasy under it? It teaches by natural feeling and aversion; it supplies the place of reason and recollection, and is excellently adapted to the occasions of life, being stronger in youth, when the passions are stronger and more restraints are necessary. Blushing hath therefore been commonly esteemed a sign of grace, and is called by one of the heathen philosophers *the color of virtue*: and generally we may observe, that the most virtuous persons are the most modest and diffident of themselves, and the most wicked are the most confirmed in insolence and impudence. Not but blushing is ambiguous, and may be the livery of guilt as well as of innocence; and possibly you have known many a man whose demure bashful look was only the mask and disguise of an impure impudent mind, and who with all the appearances of modesty and sanctity in public could yet be guilty of the grossest indecencies and vilest enormities in private. But then you must allow that such persons offend more against nature; their sin doth violence not only to their conscience, but to their constitution itself; nature plainly intended them for good, but they have

perverted themselves to evil. And is it not admirably provided for the interests of virtue, that guilt and shame are in a manner inseparable, and a man no sooner contracts the stain of the former than he is almost sure to feel uneasiness from the latter, and thus by offending against virtue offends against nature too.

Our first parents, as long as they preserved their innocence, though they were both "naked," yet were "not ashamed;" but when they had committed sin, then they were "afraid," and "hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God." As shame thus entered at first into the world, so it hath continued ever since the constant companion of guilt, add follows close upon it, insomuch that nothing is more usual than for guilty persons to betray themselves by their very looks. This sense of shame is of such force and efficacy, that it will often keep men in awe, when all other motives and arguments avail nothing. I am afraid that most of the virtue that is in the world is not owing so much to the love of virtue as to the dread of shame. More people would do wickedly, if it was not for the fear of being exposed. This altogether prevents the commission of many a sin, and others it occasions to be committed with privacy and in the dark, and preserves the appearances of virtue where it cannot maintain the reality. Even the most obdurate wretches and most abandoned of grace and goodness can
yet

yet hardly eradicate, and scarce ever totally eradicate, this fear, though they despise all others; they shake off this principle almost the last of any; and the infamy of the jail and the gallows will deter those, whom no ties of honor nor checks of conscience can restrain. Nay people will do almost any thing and suffer almost any thing rather than have their faults exposed; they can endure guilt better than infamy, and will not scruple to commit a much greater crime for the sake of concealing a less, as we have known several even murder their own children to prevent the shame and scandal of an illegitimate offspring.

So difficult is it and almost impossible to harden one's self against all sense of shame, though without doubt there is a very great difference in men's complexions and tempers, and some are born of a more bold and confident spirit, of a more daring and enterprising genius than others. This natural difference is greatly increased by the different methods of education, and the different companies they keep, and the different ways they take of living. The example of superiors hath besides a wonderful effect in overcoming natural modesty, and making men take a pride and a pleasure in those actions, of which they would otherwise be ashamed. And when any thing, however unjustifiable in itself, is become the general vogue and practice, we blush no longer at it, and instead of being ashamed of complying are ashamed

not

not to comply with the fashion. But nothing hardens men in effrontery and shamefulness like a habit and custom of doing shameful things. They improve in boldness as in wickedness, and arrive to such a pitch at last, that they glory in acting those things, which they could not so much as think of at first without horror and confusion. And then is verified in them what the prophet complains of, "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination?" "nay they are not at all ashamed, neither can they blush."

But if men were duly sensible how engaging modesty really is, they would not be so willing to get rid of it, but would preserve the appearances of it at least. For it recommends and enhances knowledge and merit, palliates and excuses error and ignorance; it maketh even vice tolerable and virtue charming; and like shade in painting softens and conceals defects, heightens and improves beauties. Excess of modesty indeed may discompose any one, and hinder him from appearing with proper advantage; but a due proportion of it conciliates esteem and affection in a wonderful manner, and by showing a regard and deference to people naturally pleases them. The most famous orator of Rome professed of himself, that he could never begin an oration without trembling, and conceives some degree of concern and confusion to be so graceful and affecting, that he prescribes it among the other qualifications

cations requisite to form a complete orator. Confidence is very unbecoming, if a man's endowments are ever so great, but more especially if they are little and insignificant: and yet for the most part the emptiest heads are the fullest of themselves; where is least worth and ability, there commonly is most arrogance and presumption; merit and modesty are almost always united. It is more peculiarly the grace and ornament of the other sex, and what the apostle (1 Tim. II. 9.) recommends above all other ornaments. Nay this virtue is of all virtues so strictly required of them, that I know not whether it is so much a commendation for any of them to have it, as it would be a disgrace and infamy to want it. A proper degree of it is indeed becoming in all sorts of persons, and if it doth not please every body, it can however justly offend no body; will enable a man to live blameless and irreproachable, and to die at last, as he had lived, with decency.

II. Let it suffice to have spoken thus much of the nature end and use of modesty and shame in general; and now proceed we to show more particularly in the second place what things we should not be ashamed of, and of what we should be ashamed though perhaps the rest of the world may glory in them. For it is certain, there is a vicious as well as a virtuous modesty; there is a shame that deserves shame; and as there are some (Philip. III. 19.) "whose
" glory

“glory is in their shame,” as the apostle saith, so there are others whose shame is their glory. Now this like other natural faculties is good or bad according to the objects and occasions, upon which it is employed. Virtue and vice are the true measure and standard of it, and it deserves censure or commendation in the same degree and proportion as it promotes the one or the other. If a man is ashamed of acting a mean or dishonorable part, of saying or doing an indecent or immoral thing, of giving any reasonable occasion of offense to any body, this is true virtuous modesty, and ought to be cherished and encouraged: but on the other hand if a man is ashamed of doing his duty and acting according to the conviction of his conscience, of professing the truth and vindicating the cause of God and religion, of opposing criminal customs and prejudices and bearing up against the stream and torrent of a wicked world, this is false vicious modesty, and ought to be discountenanced and condemned.

We may too offend as in the kind, so likewise in the degree of it, for all excess is wrong, and too much even of a good thing becomes really good for nothing. Some degree of confidence is necessary as well as some degree of modesty; for modesty without some confidence is sheepishness, and confidence without some modesty is impudence; but both rightly tempered and mixed together constitute what we call a *modest assurance*, which is so modest as to

do

do nothing that it ought not, and at the same time so assured as to do every thing that it ought.

Nay farther, when a thing is neither good nor bad but perfectly indifferent in itself; and yet is authorized by the mode and practice of the time and place where you live, there modesty will oblige a man to conform to the fashion, and not to affect needless singularities. A man must have an uncommon front to differ from all the world, unless for a very good cause; and whatever reasons are pretended, the true reason is vanity and ostentation. The son of Sirach in the conclusion of the XLIf and in the beginning of the XLIIId chapter hath given us a particular account of what things we should and of what we should not be ashamed, and you may peruse and consider it at your leisure; and in prosecution of the same good design, we will add some other instances accommodated to the present times and manners.

A man should not be ashamed of any natural defect or deformity, or of his birth and parentage, or of his rank and condition in life; for these things not being in our own power and disposal are not subjects worthy of shame. A man may be ashamed of his own conduct, but he can never be rightly ashamed of the divine dispensations. It is a shame indeed and reproach to a man to want, if he be reduced to want by his own fault and folly; but otherwise poverty is no disgrace in itself; some of the best men in the world have been the poorest;
and

and whatever burden providence layeth upon us, we know it is our duty to bear it patiently. And why should any man be ashamed of his birth and parentage, and because he is now advanced above it, be therefore willing to forget his original? It is surely nobler and more illustrious to raise a family than only to continue it. There is infinitely greater merit in doing honor to your name, than in your name doing honor to you. It is true in this sense as well as in others (Acts XX. 35.) that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." And for any natural defect or deformity we should endeavor to palliate it with superior graces and virtues, and compensate for our imperfections in one kind by our perfections in another; like Socrates, who laboring under all the disadvantages of person was therefore the more diligent to excel in wisdom and the faculties of the mind.

In these instances it is weak and ridiculous, but modesty becomes really vicious, when it hinders a man from exerting himself properly, from asserting the truth and living up to his principles; and in short whenever it induces him through servile fear and compliance to omit any duty or commit any sin. There is a courage becoming a Man and a Christian, and not only becoming but absolutely necessary, that he may be neither dissuaded from what is right, nor persuaded to what is wrong: and it may be questioned whether as many
people

people have not been ruined through too much modesty and shamefacedness as through too little. They are so yielding and easy, that they cannot find in their hearts to refuse any thing to any body; they have not the spirit and resolution to say No, but promise every thing to whoever solicits and importunes them, by which means they are frequently drawn into different, and sometimes contrary engagements, and become guilty not only of indiscreet but often of criminal compliances.

But if any man hath the boldness to ask you to do an ill thing, why should not you have as much courage to refuse him? They who have not learned to refuse any thing, have not learned one of the most necessary things in life. As the excellent (1) Brutus was wont to say, they must have employed their youth very ill and have had a very bad education, who can deny nothing.

But modesty is never more vicious, and never more to be condemned, than when we are ashamed of our religion, and afraid to confess our faith before men and glorify our father who is in heaven: and this impious modesty hath of late years prevailed to such a degree among us, that a man is almost ashamed to be betrayed into a serious reflection in company, and any religious discourse can hardly escape the imputation of hypocrisy or superstition.

(1) Plutarch. in vita Bruti.

(2) Plutarch.

stitution. The fear of being thought precise and formal occasions many a man to stifle his sentiments, and appear worse than he is in reality. We grow daily more and more modest and ashamed of doing good, and more and more daring and impudent in doing evil. A fine gentleman as he would be reputed, is ashamed to say grace at his own table, is ashamed to read prayers in his own family; and how many, who have assurance enough in other things, would yet be perfectly out of countenance to be seen in the house of God, and have stayed away so long that it would be as it were a public penance to come at last! It was not thus in former times, it is not thus in other countries: and if we are more afraid of the ridicule of profane men than of the terrors of the Lord, what can we expect will be the consequence, but that he will be ashamed of us in the next world as we are ashamed of him in this, and cast us from his presence for ever; according to that dreadful denunciation of our Saviour (Mark VIII. 38.) "Whosoever shall be
 " ashamed of me and of my words in this
 " adulterous and sinful generation, of him also
 " shall the son of man be ashamed, when he
 " cometh in the glory of his father with his
 " holy angels!"

These are things whereof we should not be ashamed, and yet too often are; there are others, whereof we should be ashamed, and yet too often are not. We should be ashamed of every thing

thing that is indecent and immoral, though fortified by numbers without number. "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil," saith the scripture: (Exod. XXIII. 2.) and surely a wise man would rather be thought unfashionable than do what is criminal, and would be less out of countenance to be in the right by himself, than to be in the wrong with thousands.

There are people who glory in being (Isa. V. 22, 11.) "mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink, who rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink, who continue until night till wine inflame them:" but "be not" you "drunk with wine," as the apostle saith, (Eph. V. 18.) "wherein is excess." A drunkard requires not only a strong head, but a strong forehead too. There is no greater shame than for a man to make himself a beast.

There are people who indulge their criminal amours as openly as if they were lawful passions, and (Eph. IV. 19.) "being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness:" but if any vices are contrary to modesty, these are more especially, and they who are not ashamed of them now will be so hereafter. Shame is the portion of them and of their offspring. No honors descend to the illegitimate. As the wise man saith, (Wild. IV. 6.) "Children begotten of unlawful beds are

“ witnesses of wickedness against their parents
“ in their trial.”

It is too much the fashion of the world to live above their fortune, and to spend more than they can afford, and at the same time to deride and despise as covetous and mean-spirited all those who will not run the same length of extravagance with themselves : but surely it is a less disgrace to want a thing than to run in debt for it, and there is more glory and honor in living upon a little of one's own than in being prodigal and profuse of what is properly another's : and how mean and contemptible must the man appear, when he is stript of his borrowed gaudy plumes, and every bird demands his own feather ?

It is too much the practice in low life, and of many who ought to know better in high life, to curse and to swear, as if there was something of bravery in it : but do you reverence an oath, be not afraid of it when you are called upon by proper authority, but be afraid of nothing more than of offending the divine majesty by taking his name in vain.

It is too much the delight of many to pass whole days and evenings after evenings in gaming, and probably you will often be tempted to be of their party : but as the (2) Heathen moralist says, be not you therefore out of countenance, nor fear being made the subject of their raillery, but reply with Xenophanes,

(2) Plutarch. *de superstitione*.

who

who when he was called a coward for refusing to play at dice, said Yes, I confess, I am a very great coward, and want the courage to do an ill thing.

Others may think to gain the reputation of a ready forward wit by ridiculing sacred persons and sacred things : but be you more decent than to profane the religion of your country ; have more piety, or at least more manners ; and know (1 Cor. III. 19.) that “ the wisdom of “ this world is foolishness with God.”

Others may pretend to uncommon sanctity, boast of extraordinary gifts and communications of the holy spirit, and (Col. II. 18.) “ intrude into those things which they have “ not seen, vainly puffed up by their fleshly “ minds :” but be you more modest than to assume such merit to yourself, and (Ecclus III. 21, 22.) “ seek not out the things which are “ too hard for thee, neither search the things “ which are above thy strength, but what is “ commanded thee think thereupon with reverence.” In a word, be resolute only to do good, and ashamed always to do evil.

Hear this all ye people, but attend especially you who are young, for youth is the season of modesty, and (Ecclus XLI. 24.) “ So shall “ ye be truly shame-faced, and find favor before all men.” Shamelessness in sin is the certain forerunner of destruction ; so the prophet hath declared it, and the course of events will justify it ; “ Were they ashamed when

“ they had committed abomination? nay they
“ were not at all ashamed, neither could they
“ blush: therefore they shall fall among them
“ that fall; at the time that I visit them
“ they shall be cast down saith the Lord.” If
not temporal judgments, yet certainly eternal
punishments will be their final doom and por-
tion; and sinners have none other alternative
and option, but shame here or misery hereafter.
“ What fruit (Rom. VI. 21.) had ye then in
“ those things whereof ye are now ashamed?
“ for the end of those things is death.” It is
a most excellent prayer of the wise man, and
with that I will conclude: (Ecclus XXIII. 4,
5, 6.) “ O Lord, Father and God of my life,
“ give me not a proud look, but turn away
“ from thy servant always a haughty mind:
“ turn away from me vain hopes and concu-
“ piscence, and thou shalt hold him up that is
“ desirous always to serve thee: let not the
“ greediness of the belly nor the lusts of the
“ flesh take hold of me, and give not over me
“ thy servant to an impudent mind.”

DISSERTATION XXIX.

Against learned pride.

NO disease is more incident to the mind of man than pride, and nothing more apt to swell us with pride than a conceit of our wisdom and knowlege. It was the sin of our first parents that they aspired to be "as gods" "knowing good and evil;" and no wonder their children inherit their corruption, and fondly prefer the tree of knowlege to the tree of life. For every man values himself upon his knowlege of one sort or other. Every man is sufficient for his own station at least in his own eyes. As a shrewd author (Rochefaucalt) observes, God hath not made a more equal distribution of any thing in the world than of sense and understanding, because every one is satisfied and content with his own share. Nay commonly those who have least merit, with a self-sufficient air and magisterial countenance pretend to most; and though few are willing to receive advice, yet every one is forward enough to give it. An half-learned atheist shall value himself as much as the greatest philosopher: and the little wits and free-thinkers of the age are wiser in their own conceit than "seven men who can render a reason." A

man easily obtains his own good opinion, and then fancies that he has a right to the good opinion of others: And in fact it is found, that *fool* is one of the vilest terms of reproach, and nothing affronts a man more than to call in question his conduct and understanding. We know some persons are well enough contented to pass for *knaves*, provided they can but have the credit of playing the knave cleverly; but want of sense is an imputation that offends every man, and is resented even by those who seem most incapable of resentment.

To correct this spirit of pride and vain-glory we have a special command in the words of the prophet. (Jer. IX. 23.) "Thus saith the Lord;" a solemn and emphatic preface, and therefore we may be certain that what it introduces deserves our peculiar regard and attention: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom." Let not the wise man "praise himself" (as the Hebrew word imports) for his wisdom; let him not boast himself for having parts and understanding, nor despise others for not having them, as he imagins, in so large a proportion as himself. And to show that this injunction is laid upon us not without very good reasons, the following particulars may be taken into consideration.

1. In the first place let it be considered that all human wisdom is at the best very short and imperfect. Our ignorance is infinitely greater than our knowlege. If things are too plain
and

and obvious, we will not stoop to them; if too hard and abstruse, they will not submit to us. An object too near or too remote escapes our sight; too great or too little surpasses our imagination. Body and spirit are alike removed from our comprehension; of both we know some properties, the real nature and essence of neither. If our thoughts ascend into heaven, we are quite lost in a world of wonders, "things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." If we descend again to earth, there is not an animal, nor a plant, nor a particle of matter, that is not able to baffle and confound the most exalted understanding. There are mysteries in nature as well as in religion; and where we have the light of demonstration and certainty in one thing, we are beset with darkness and obscurity in a thousand.

But we need not look abroad for problems to puzzle us. Man himself is a riddle to himself: and the mind, that understands other things, understands not its own powers and operations. Wherever we turn our eyes within us or without us, we can discover little else but the short-sightedness of human reason. Proofs of our ignorance are every where at hand: and a much easier task it would be to define what we know, than enumerate what we know not. We are tied down to a point; and the horizon, that bounds and terminates our view, is no-
Q 4 thing

thing in comparison of the whole extent of created things.

But leaving those things which are plainly out of the reach of human understanding, where is the mind so large as to take in the whole circle of arts and sciences, and comprehend all that men can comprehend? If we shine in some parts of learning, in some again we are defective and in the dark; as the sea loseth the ground in one country, that it gaineth in another. One genius can be a thorow master of only one science; and so wide and diffusive are even the single branches of certain arts and sciences, that they find sufficient employment for the whole life of man.

And what is little in itself, I fear, has been made less by our methods of teaching and study. For false learning is worse than no learning. Those who have read the most, are not always the best read; and some men are only the more ignorant for being scholars. Such are the forms and rudiments of science established in some famous schools of literature, that I know not whether our artificial ignorance may not be greater than our natural.

In reality the man who thinketh to know all things, knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. The farther we carry our speculations, still the more matter we discover for future inquiries. The higher we stand as I may say on the hill of learning, the wider prospect is
opened

opened to us of large tracts and fields of science yet uncultivated yet unfrequented, and like Moses on mount Nebo we may have an obscure view of the country at a distance, but must never expect to reach it in this imperfect state. The greatest geniuses in all ages have confessed, and gloried in confessing the vastness of arts and the shortness of human life and human knowlege. Socrates was reputed by the oracle the wisest man living, because he frankly acknowledged that he knew nothing : and a wiser than Socrates observes, (Eccles. VIII. 16, 17.)

“ When I applied my heart to know wisdom,
“ and to see the business that is done upon the
“ earth ; then I beheld all the work of God,
“ that a man cannot find out the work that is
“ done under the sun ; because though a man
“ labor to seek it out, yet he shall not find it,
“ yea farther, though a wise man think to
“ know it, yet shall he not be able to find it.”

2. In the next place let it be considered, that human wisdom and knowlege are liable to many contingences, and are of short and uncertain duration. The greatest wits are often taken away in the prime of their age ; as the fruits which are ripe the soonest, the soonest drop off and decay. True wisdom is with great difficulty attained, and when it is attained, it is easily lost or impaired. The noon of life quickly passes away and is gone, and our minds have no sooner broke through the mists, and dispelled the prejudices of childhood and youth,
but

but presently they begin to decline, imagination languishes, memory decays, and all our faculties set in the gray evening of old age. Even while our faculties are at the highth, and shine forth in their meridian lustre, how often are they clouded and overcast by one accident, one passion or other?

The body too often casteth a vapor upon our reason, and (Wisd. IX. 15.) "preffeth down the mind that museth upon many things." Too much or too little food disturbs our imagination; too much or too little sleep renders us heavy and unfit for thinking. An unlucky blow or a fall, a sudden apoplexy or a burning fever may deprive us at once of all our reason and understanding. Neither is great knowlege to be acquired without much study, and (Ecclef. XII. 12.) "much study is a weariness to the flesh." The labors of the mind are vastly greater and more painful than those of the body, and nothing exhausts the spirits, and impairs the constitution more than hard study. Hollow eyes and hectic looks, consumptions and want of digestion, with many other diseases, are incidental to a studious thoughtful sedentary life: and when the body is indisposed, how can the mind exert itself freely and with full scope? An engin wound too high or overcharged will easily crack and burst in pieces; and the mind that thinketh on too many things is apt to grow extravagant and unruly; and if nothing
else,

else, yet too much learning itself may make us mad.

Such is the state of man. When we are young, we think as children and speak as children; and when we are old, we are in danger of turning children again. There are innumerable instances of the greatest scholars and wisest politicians, who have survived their very senses, and whose bodies have proved as it were the tombs and sepulchres of their understandings. And what a sad lamentable object are the ruins of a great genius, a decrepit withered body without a reasonable soul to inform it!

3. It also deserves our consideration, that the wisest personages, at the same time that their knowledge exalts them, have something again to humble and abase them. Every man has, as one may say, his blind side, through which he is easily attacked and outwitted. The purest metals are not without their allay, the most shining characters are not without their spots and blemishes; and (Eccles. X. 1.) “as dead
“flies cause the ointment of the apothecary
“to send forth a stinking favor, so doth a little
“folly him that is in reputation for wisdom
“and honor.”

We may, I think, generally observe, that great geniuses have something odd and unaccountable in them, something singular in their mien and manner, that renders them ridiculous in the eyes of the world, while their parts and understanding raise the wonder and admiration
of

of all who know them. Great wits are nearly allied to madmen; and the former have now and then their reveries as extravagant and wild as the latter. As the greatest blockheads sometimes enjoy lucid intervals; so men of the brightest parts have sometimes their dark and gloomy hours, in which they are strangely overseen, and think and act altogether beneath themselves. All people remark, that the greatest scholars usually know very little of that useful part of knowlege, *the world*. A man may have read many books, and not have read men; may be well skilled in the rules of logic, and little versed in the better rules of good breeding.

Besides, the most ingenious persons are often cramped and straitened in their circumstances; for (Eccles. IX. 11.) "neither is bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all." The best concerted schemes are often disappointed, and the wise are taken in the craftiness of their own counsel. The poverty of poets is grown proverbial; and how much soever projects may take, yet the projectors are almost sure to starve.

As the finest jewels are not always the best set, so neither is the fairest mind lodged always in the fairest body. St. Paul (2 Cor. XII. 7.) had "a thorn in the flesh, lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations:" and it was with him, as it is with several eminent men, (X. 10.)
 "his

“ his writings” were “ weighty and powerful,” but “ his bodily presence” was “ weak and “ his speech contemptible.”

And what is the worst of all, (Eccles. I. 18.) “ In much wisdom is much grief, and he that “ increaseth knowlege, increaseth sorrow;” if we may take the word of one, who had the best and fullest experience of the matter. Men of fine parts have a quicker and more exquisite sense of things than the generality of mankind. Their taste is extremely nice, and a little thing is apt to disgust it. They may be said to suffer what others only feel. What is barely disagreeable to others is perfectly shocking to them. They are subject to a thousand little jealousies and uneasinesses of mind, to which the stupid and unthinking are utter strangers. Their passions are for the most very strong and apt to grow wild, as the rankest weeds abound most in the richest soils.

Thus it appears that the greatest men have their imperfections, as so many antidotes against the poison of pride. Their merits may weigh heavy in one scale, but there are infirmities and defects to counterpoise and balance them in the other.

4. It is farther to be considered, that pride is destructive of that very learning and knowlege which are its own foundation and support. (Prov. XXVI. 12.) “ Seest thou a man wise “ in his own conceit? there is more hope of a “ fool than of him.” Pride is the worst quality

lity in the world of a learner. The proud man has too high an opinion of himself, and too mean an one of other people, to regard any merit, any performances but his own. He would fain pass for an universal scholar, and by grasping at all things he can thoroughly comprehend nothing. He has no sooner got a smattering in any art or science than instantly he conceives that he is a perfect master of it. He always affects novelty and singularity. He scorneth to follow the herd in the beaten track. If the many happen to be in the right, he purposely goeth wrong: and is not so much concerned to think and say what is just and true, as what is new and surprising. He frameth some particular set of opinions to himself, these he honors with the high titles of self-evidence and demonstration; and whatever coincides not with them, he rejects as unphilosophical and absurd. He fancies all truth, all knowlege to lie within his own sphere; and all things beyond it are trifles, are vanity, are nothing.

Besides, when a proud man is once out of the way, he can hardly ever be brought into it again: for (Prov. XIII. 1.) "a scorner hear-
"eth not rebuke," says the wise man. He will never acknowledge himself to be in the wrong. He rejects all counsel and advice. He is overbearing in all sorts of company; he ingrosseth the discourse to himself, and will not afford others a fair and candid hearing. He contradicts every body, and will bear contra-
diction

dition from no body. In fine is there a sceptic, an heretic, an infidel, an atheist? Pride is the great parent of them all; and more phrenzy and madness have sprung from pride than from any disorder or all the disorders in the world. An evident token of a great capacity indeed, is to contain a great deal and yet not to be full, to be wise and yet to be humble; and if you are wise, you will of course be humble. "If any man think that he knoweth any thing," saith the apostle, (1 Cor. VIII. 2.) "he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."

5. Other considerations may be drawn from the state of mankind and our own. For where is the man so wise as to have none equal, none superior to him? We may ever observe that men of mean spirits and of a narrow education, "measuring themselves by themselves," "and comparing themselves among themselves," are most liable to pride and vain-glory. They who converse with only one sort of men, and those perhaps their inferiors and flatterers, are always the most full of themselves and most regardless of others; whereas by travel and polite company, by correspondence and intercourse with persons of different ranks and professions, mens minds are wonderfully opened and enlarged, and they acquire the art of being, or at least of seeming affable and condescending to all mankind.

A man should consider too that he can make but poor advances in learning and knowledge

by himself. Other hands, other heads must assist him. As there are defects in the greatest characters, so there are beauties in the meanest. The wisest man may learn something from every body; and upon a nearer acquaintance we may discover some excellencies or other, of which before we were not aware. Whatever we may think of ourselves, others have their good qualities as well as we, though commonly we are pleased to look at our own, as I may say, through the magnifying end of the perspective, and at theirs through the other. And as they have their good qualities as well as we, so we have our imperfections as well as they; and perhaps the more we enjoy in one kind, the more we suffer in another.

Besides all men naturally hate the proud opinionative man; and he who despises every one is in return by every one despised. Humility you will always find the ready road to respect and honor, the less of which you arrogate the more you will receive. But pride ever defeats its own end; it is always aiming at respect, and is sure always to lose its aim. It is as our Saviour saith (Luke XIV. 11.) "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

6. If instead of looking on those below us, we turn our eyes to those heavenly beings above us, we shall find that man, compared with angels and archangels, is altogether lighter than
vanity

vanity itself. What advantages must those spiritual beings enjoy over creatures immersed in matter? Who can think on the vast and amazing distance between them and us, and not cry out with the son of Sirach (Ecclus X. 18.) "Pride was not made for man," for man who probably is one of the lowest in the orders of intelligent beings.

7. Finally and above all let us consider, that this temper of mind is particularly hateful in the sight of God. Pride occasioned the fall of angels. Pride expelled our first parents out of paradise. Inspired writers again and again forbid this learned pride, and denounce a "wee" unto them that are wise in their own eyes, "and prudent in their own sight." (Isa. V. 21.) And in the language of scripture (James IV. 6. 1 Pet. V. 5.) God is emphatically said to "resist the proud," to set himself as it were in opposition to them, and fight against them. Pride is a sort of sacrilege, robbing God of so much honor as it arrogates to ourselves. It is a sort of idolatry, "sacrificing" as it were "unto" "our own net," and "burning incense" as it were "unto our own drag." But (1 Cor. III. 19.) "the wisdom of this world is foolishness" "with God." We may build a tower whose top may reach unto heaven, but God will confound our devices, and scatter the proud in the "imagination of their hearts." Indeed it is impossible to have worthy notions of the deity, and at the same time not to think meanly of

ourselves. For what is earth and ashes before its maker? What are our little perverse minds in comparison with the supreme universal mind, the original of all that is good and amiable in nature? Alas! the highest pitch of human knowlege beareth no manner of proportion to the divine! It is only as a point to infinity, as a moment to eternity. Our knowlege too, such as it is, is the gift of God; and it was given us for his glory, and not merely for our own. To him it is owing, and to him therefore be the praise for ever and ever. It is good advice of the wise king Solomon, (Prov. III. 5, 6, 7.)

“ Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and
 “ lean not to thine own understanding; In all
 “ thy ways acknowlege him, and he shall di-
 “ rect thy paths; Be not wise in thine own
 “ eyes, fear the Lord, and depart from evil.”

Upon the whole, what is there in human wisdom to feed our vanity and self-conceit? considering that it is imperfect in itself, and made still more imperfect by the glosses of false learning and false philosophy—that it is altogether precarious and of uncertain continuance, with difficulty acquired and with ease forgotten—that it is always attended with some weakness or other, and accompanied with pain equal to the pleasure: considering farther that pride is destructive of that learning and knowlege, upon which the proud man values himself—is hateful in the sight of good angels and good men—and involving us in the guilt, it may be feared will involve us likewise in the punishment

of

of the devil and his angels. And if pride and knowlege so ill consist together, how much more inconsistent must be pride and ignorance? If vanity be so surfeiting and nauseous in men of parts, a blockhead and vain must be quite intolerable. But if knowlege cannot justify our aspiring pretensions, certainly nothing else can; for nothing is so valuable as knowlege, nothing is so properly our own, or so immediately belongs to us, as our sense and understanding. In reality there is nothing, there can be nothing worth being proud of in the narrow circle of human life and human affairs. Examine severally all the goods of mind, body, and estate, and you will soon be convinced that there is no foundation for solid glory, but the knowlege of God, such a knowlege as is not barren and resteth not in speculation, but exerteth itself in action, and bringeth forth good works. This is the wisdom that will make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. This and this only will administer true satisfaction to us here, and crown us with everlasting happiness hereafter. "Thus
"saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory
"in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man
"glory in his might, let not the rich man
"glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth
"glory in this, that he understandeth and
"knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which
"exercise loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I
"delight saith the Lord."

DISSERTATION XXX.

On the philosophy of scripture.

WE live in an age that affects to be thought a learned and philosophic age; and it must be acknowledged indeed that it is more so than several which have preceded it. There was a time when a mathematician was looked upon with horror as a magician. It was heresy to affirm that there were Antipodes: and a (1) famous astronomer only for asserting the motion of the earth was committed to the prison of the Inquisition. But God be thanked we live now in days of greater freedom of thought and greater enlargement of knowledge; and some of our most eminent divines have also been some of the most eminent philosophers and mathematicians. The venerable names of Wilkins, Barrow, Clarke, and many others will readily occur upon this occasion, who have excelled in philosophical as well as in theological learning; so far is the one from clashing and interfering with the other. The frequenting of lectures of natural and experimental philosophy is become almost a fashion among the polite of both sexes. And certainly no studies are more entertaining as well

(1) Galileo.

(2) Hymn.

well as more useful, and are so far from being any disservice to the cause of religion, as was imagined in times of ignorance and superstition, that I am persuaded nothing will more effectually promote it. All truths must be consistent, and one can never contradict another. True philosophy is the handmaid to true religion; and the knowledge of the works of nature will lead one to the knowledge of the God of nature, "the invisible things of him (Rom. I. 20.)" "being clearly seen by the things which are made, even his eternal power and "godhead."

But as all things are liable to be abused, and the best perhaps are capable of the greatest abuse; so these studies are apt above all others to puff up little minds, and to fill them with singular conceits and opinions. The half-physicians and half-philosophers are the sceptics and deists of the age. The half-thinkers are the men who set up for free-thinkers. Such wise and understanding persons as they esteem themselves, who look upon nature with other eyes than the rest of mankind, must not follow in the beaten track, nor think and argue like common men. They will be satisfied with nothing less than demonstration, and for their parts cannot receive any book as a divine revelation, that is in the least contradictory to natural philosophy and natural reason. The scriptures, they imagin, are in many instances, especially in the Old Testament, contradictory

to natural philosophy and natural reason; and therefore use their utmost endeavors to ridicule and explode them; and thus professing themselves philosophers they become infidels, or rather as St. Paul hath expressed it (Rom. I. 22.) "professing themselves wise they become "fools." It may be as proper therefore to give the caution now as it was in the days of the apostles, (Col. II. 8.) "Beware lest any "man spoil you through philosophy and vain "deceit after the tradition of men, after the "rudiments of the world, and not after "Christ." And to vindicate our religion in this respect, it may be proper to consider the philosophy of scripture. In doing which I believe it will appear that the true religion teacheth nothing contrary to the true philosophy, and those passages, which seem the most liable to exception, may admit of a favorable interpretation. Nay farther I believe it will appear that the scriptures not only contain nothing contrary to the true philosophy, but mutually confirm it and are confirmed by it in several instances, and some of those discoveries, which are so much boasted of by the moderns, were not wholly unknown to the ancients.

I. I believe it will appear that the true religion teacheth nothing contrary to the true philosophy, and those passages, which seem the most liable to exception, may admit of a favorable interpretation. It is a just objection to the Mohammedan religion, that it teacheth
such

such absurd things about the frame and structure of the world : and if the Christian religion did the like, the like objection would lie against it ; for revealed truths can never so grossly and notoriously contradict natural truths. But such contradictions we deny there are any in scripture, and may safely challenge our adversaries to produce a single instance, where the one is not easily reconcilable with the other. Rather than admit of any such difference or contradiction between them, a modest man would suspect, either that his philosophy was erroneous, or he was mistaken in the sense of scripture. For certainly God is a God of truth, and can never be the author of contradictions ; his word and his works can never be repugnant the one to the other ; all that proceeds from him must be beauty and harmony ; scripture and nature, revelation and reason, divinity and philosophy must all agree together. We must consider indeed that the scriptures were not designed to teach us philosophy but religion, were not given to improve us in mathematical knowledge but in moral, were not written to make us better philosophers and naturalists but better men and christians : And therefore so little is said of philosophy from the beginning to the end ; and whenever any thing of this kind is mentioned, it is mentioned only occasionally, rather in short hints and allusions, as a thing known already, and according to the current language of the times,

as the greatest philosophers speak now-a-days, though perhaps that language be not exactly conformable to the truth of things. It is good advice to think with the wise, and speak with the vulgar; and according to the inspired writers (Rom. VI. 19. Gal. III. 15.) often "speak after the manner of men" in condescension to their prejudices and infirmities.

"Sun, stand thou still," said Joshua, (X. 12.) and the expression hath been greatly cavilled at, as implying the motion of the sun instead of the earth. But the word in the original signifies "Be silent," and thus it is translated in the margin of our bibles: and who would strictly canvas and examin a metaphor? But if the words are understood as they are translated, and the motion of the sun is implied in them; yet why might not Joshua speak according to the philosophy of his own times? or if he had spoken otherwise, and had said "Earth stand thou still," where would have been the miracle, or how could he have been understood, when the earth was supposed always to stand still? Nay even though the motion of the earth had been demonstrated then as plainly as it is now, yet surely Joshua might be allowed to make use of a popular expression implying the motion of the sun, as well as the greatest philosophers speak now of the sun's *rising* and *setting* without the least scruple or hesitation, though every one be now perfectly convinced, that the vicissitudes of day and night are owing
to

to the revolution of the earth round its axis, and not of the sun round the earth. This expression therefore of Joshua may meet with the same favorable allowance and indulgence: and you will betray as much dissingenuity and pendency in cavilling at the one as at the other.

As to the thing itself it is not a poetical flight like that of (2) Callimachus, of the sun's stopping his chariot to behold the dances of Diana's nymphs, and lengthening the days. It is not a fabulous tale like that of the sun's turning back with horror at the bloody banquet prepared by Atreus. What the Heathens imagined, might be derived from some imperfect traditions of this event, which was a real and a most extraordinary miracle, wrought by God at the prayer of Joshua, the production of a supernatural light, the marvelous prolongation of the day, till the Israelites had obtained a complete victory over their enemies: and it had altogether the same appearance and the same effect, as if the sun and moon had stopt in their courses; and at the same time was a proper exertion and display of the divine power over those heavenly luminaries in the presence of their worshippers. Something of the same kind was done, (2 Kings XX. Isa. XXXVIII.) when in the case of Hezekiah, at the prayer of Isaiah, "the sun returned ten degrees on the sun-dial of Ahaz." As they were both di-

Edginsil (2) Hymn. in Dianam. 180, &c.

(3) Facile

vine miracles, it is no wonder that human philosophy cannot sufficiently explain how they were effected.

The Mosaical history of the creation hath been made the ground and occasion of several objections; but most of these objections arise only from ignorance of the original language; and the more the original history is understood and examined, the more just and authentic will it appear, and more agreeable to the genuine principles of sound theism and philosophy. To give two or three principal instances, for it might be thought too long and tedious to enter into all the particulars.

Some persons make a difficulty of understanding what is meant by "the firmament (Gen. I. 6.) "in the midst of the waters to divide "the waters from the waters." But is not the word *firmament* the principal occasion of the difficulty? In the margin it is rendered *expansion*, and signifies the circumambient air or atmosphere, wherein we breathe and live. And doth not this divide the waters from the waters, the waters in the sea from the waters which float above us in clouds and vapors? For as it is expressed in Jeremiah, (X. 13.) "there "is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and "he causeth the vapors to ascend from the "ends of the earth."

It is said that "God made two great lights, (Gen. I. 16.) "the greater light to rule the "day, and the lesser light to rule the night;"
and

and it is objected that this account is very unphilosophical, for the moon is not a *light* speaking physically and speaking properly no more than the earth itself. But this is criticising only upon words; for the moon, though not a light in itself, is yet a light in its effects, as it reflects the light of the sun to us. And they are both called *great*, not as being greater than all other stars and planets, but as appearing greater to us, and being of greater use and consequence to this world.

Some look upon it as absurd and impossible, that the light should be produced on the *first* day, and yet the sun and moon not be formed till the *fourth* day. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;" so that the bodies of the sun and moon were created at first as well as the body of the earth: and the light that was produced on the first day was either that of the sun, or different from it. If it was the light of the sun, we may suppose this light to appear imperfectly at first, and not to shine out in its full lustre till the fourth day, the air perhaps or atmosphere not being sufficiently cleared for the transfusion of its rays before that time. But if it was different from the sun, where is the impossibility in nature, or the contradiction to reason, that God should form a light or fire to warm and impregnate the new creation? Which light or fire might either spend and consume itself, or be transplanted into the orbs of the sun

sun and stars, which though created on the first day, yet might not for the reasons assigned become those visible glorious luminaries till the fourth day of the creation.

These are the most material objections: and in the general the account seemeth strange of a creation in *six days*: and it is certain an almighty being might have created the universe with a word in an instant or any portion of time as well as in six days. But as Moses, by far the oldest historian in the world, says it was effected in six days, why not in six days as well as in any other period of time? Perhaps it was ordered so in condescension to the capacities of angels, who were spectators of the works of creation, when according to what is said in the book of Job, (XXXVIII. 7.) "the morning stars sang together, and "the sons of God shouted for joy." Perhaps it was ordered to mark out more strongly to us the observation of the sabbath, or the dedication of one day in seven to the worship of the great creator of us and all things. Perhaps it was designed to be typical and significative of the duration of the world, that as the world was created in six days, so according to ancient tradition it may endure six thousand years, "one day being with the "Lord as a thousand years, (2 Pet. III. 8.) "and a thousand years as one day." In Samuel (1 Sam. II. 8.) mention is made of "the pillars of the earth," and in the book
of

of Job (XXXVII. 18.) the sky is compared to "a molten looking-glass:" but who would interpret similies, metaphors, and such like figures of speech according to the strictness of the letter? It is easy, said (3) one of the greatest writers and philosophers among the ancients, to criticise upon a bold glowing expression, and to ridicule in cold blood what is spoken in heat of rapture and warmth of imagination: and if this excuse may be pleaded for other authors, much more may be admitted in the oriental stile and manner of writing.

It is a mark of good judgment as well as of a happy temper, rather to be candid than severe critics, rather to commend than to find fault with any author. At least do not censure and find fault, till you are fully assured that you are in the right, and they are in the wrong. This is a justice that we owe to the writings of men, who are liable to be mistaken and deceived; and greater reverence surely is due to what is otherwise proved to be the infallible word of God. But judge only of the inspired writings, as you would of other ancient authors, making all fair and reasonable allowances for their age and country, their manners and customs, their stile and language, so different from our own; and the more you consider

(3) Facile est verbum aliquod incendiis irridere. Cicer. ardens (ut ita dicam) notare, Orator. Sect. 27. idque restinctis jam animorum

(4) Princeps

sider and understand them, the more you will be convinced of their truth and excellence, and be ready in this sense also to say with the apostle (Rom. III. 4.) "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, "That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."

If there are any other objections their edge is blunted by what hath been said already; but we conceive that we have singled out the principal passages, which have usually been objected, or indeed can be objected, against the philosophy of scripture. And thus far I hope it hath appeared that the true religion teacheth nothing contrary to the true philosophy, and those passages which seem the most liable to exception may admit of a favorable interpretation. Nay farther

II. I believe it will appear that the scriptures not only contain nothing contrary to the true philosophy, but mutually confirm it and are confirmed by it in several instances, and some of those discoveries which are so much boasted of by the moderns, were not wholly unknown to the ancients.

What heathen author hath given us near so probable, so rational an account of the creation and beginning of things as Moses? He is certainly as philosophical, as he is religious, in ascribing all to the divine command and operation. The creation and deluge are no
more

more to be accounted for mechanically than miracles; they are themselves the greatest of miracles; and the *theories* which have been framed to solve these appearances have really merited no better title than that of *philosophical romances*. All such pretenders to comprehend and adjust the works of God with the understandings of men are best answered with the questions which God put to Job; (XXXVIII. 2, 4.) "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowlege? Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare if thou hast understanding."

Moses represents the earth at first as in a state of fluidity; "the Spirit of God," says he, (Gen. I. 2.) "moved upon the face of the waters." St. Peter too (2 Pet. III. 5.) speaketh of the earth as being formed out of a fluid; "the earth standing out of the water and in the midst of water;" or as it may better be translated, the earth *consisting* (*ὑπερῶσα*) of water and in the midst of water. The same tradition reached also some of the heathen philosophers; and Thales particularly, one of the seven wise men, and the wisest of them all, as (4) Cicero informs us, said that all things were made out of water. Others after him taught the same doctrine. And do our modern discoveries in the least contradict or disprove

(4) Princeps Thales, unus ē dixit constare omnia. Cicero. septem, cui sex reliquos concessisse primas ferunt, ex aqua Acad. II. 37.

(5) Harris's

prove it? or rather do they not more and more illustrate and confirm it? It hath been proved that the earth is not a sphere exactly but a spheroid, whose equatorial diameter is somewhat longer than the polar. If the earth was ever in a state of fluidity, its revolution round its axis must necessarily induce such a figure, because near the equatorial parts must needs be the greatest centrifugal force, and consequently there the fluid must rise and swell most. And thus scripture and philosophy agree together, and confirm each other; scripture asserts that the earth was in a state of fluidity, and philosophy evinces that it must have been in such a state from its very figure.

It hath been by some supposed that Moses was also the author of the book of Job: but whoever was the author of it, he was without doubt a man of most surprising knowledge, and such as may be admired even at this distance. The principle of gravitation, that pervades and supports the material world, is accounted a modern discovery; but must not this author have had a notion of something like it, when he said of God (XXVI. 7.) "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing?" For how can the earth be considered as "hanging upon nothing," without some imperfect idea at least of gravitation?

It is needless to remark how beautiful are the feathers of the peacock and ostrich. The latter

latter of these birds, the ostrich, is observed by naturalists to bury her eggs in the sand, and to leave them there to be hatched by the kindly warmth and influence of the sun. How handsomely is this expressed by the author of the book of Job? (XXXIX. 13, &c.) "Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks, or wings and feathers unto the ostrich? which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust; And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them; She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers; God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding:" and she is observed to be so destitute of understanding, that when she is hunted, she commonly taketh refuge behind a tree, and because she cannot see her pursuers, imagines that neither can they see her, and by these means is usually taken; or otherwise her speed and her strength are such as might easily preserve her; "What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider."

Could any natural historian describe the nature and properties of the eagle better than the same author hath done? (ver. 27, &c.) "Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place: From thence she

VOL. III. S. seeketh

“ seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar
 “ off: Her young ones also suck up blood,
 “ and where the slain are, there is she.” So
 likewise in the rest of his descriptions there
 is a happy mixture of the spirit and imagination
 of poetry with the truth and exactness of
 philosophy.

We find Moses also alluding to a very remarkable property of eagles. (5) “ They fly
 “ round their nest, and vary their flights for
 “ the instruction of their young; and afterwards taking them on their backs, they
 “ soar with them aloft in order to try their
 “ strength, shaking them off into the air;
 “ and if they perceive them too weak to sustain themselves, they with surprising dexterity fly under them again, and receive
 “ them on their wings to prevent their fall.
 “ The eagle is supposed to be the only sort of
 “ bird indued with this kind of instinct, and
 “ this serves to explain one of the boldest and
 “ most beautiful similies in the sacred writings.
 “ This occurs in the song of Moses, where
 “ he thus describes the march of the children
 “ of Israel through the wilderness (Deut.
 “ XXXII. 11, 12.) *As the eagle stirreth up her
 “ nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth
 “ abroad her wings, taketh them and beareth
 “ them on her wings: So the Lord alone did
 “ lead him, and there was no strange God with
 “ him.*”

(5) Harris's Voyages, B. I. Ch. 2. Sect. 14.

(6) Boyle's

“him.” We are farther informed by some writers, “that the eagle at certain periods
“soars very high, and drops at once into the
“sea, after which all his feathers fall off
“by degrees, and others succeed them. This
“is thought to be alluded to Psal. CIII. 4.
“*Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, so*
“*that thy youth is renewed like the eagles.*”

It is said of Solomon (1 Kings IV. 33.) that “he spake of trees from the cedar-tree
“that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that
“springeth out of the wall; he spake also of
“beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things,
“and of fishes.” But to our regret there are
no remains of these discourses; or otherwise
they might have done as much honor to his
name as his proverbs and other writings, and
he might then have appeared as excellent a
natural as he doth now a *moral* philosopher.

Solomon’s skill in natural philosophy is discovered in a singular instance observed by Mr. Boyle. In the XXVth chapter of the Proverbs, ver. 20. Solomon is speaking of things very incongruous one to another. “As he
“that taketh away a garment in cold weather,
“and as vinegar upon nitre; so is he that
“singeth songs to an heavy heart.” But there is no such antipathy between vinegar and common nitre; it is true only of Egyptian nitre, which being a natural alkali will cause an ebullition when joined with any acid salt.

“ Wherefore,” saith (6) Mr. Boyle, “ strongly
 “ presuming, that Solomon, who reigned in
 “ Judea a country near to Egypt, and had
 “ much commerce with the Egyptians, whose
 “ king’s daughter he had married, made use
 “ of Egyptian nitre as the best known, if not
 “ the only in his time and country, I quickly
 “ poured upon it some strong vinegar, and
 “ found as I expected, that there presently
 “ ensued a manifest conflict, with noise and
 “ store of bubbles; with which experiment
 “ I afterwards acquainted some critics, and
 “ other learned men who were not ill pleased
 “ with it.” So strictly philosophical is holy
 writ even in those passages which seem liable
 to exception.

The migration of birds from one climate to another at the proper seasons is a wonderful instinct of nature; and how elegantly is it applied by the prophet Jeremiah; (VIII. 7.)
 “ Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her
 “ appointed times, and the turtle, and the
 “ crane, and the swallow, observe the time
 “ of their coming; but my people know not
 “ the judgment of the Lord!”

A great noise something like a violent explosion in the air is the usual concomitant of an earthquake. It may well be remembered in the late earthquakes, which alarmed the
 inhabi-

(6) Boyle’s *Producibleness* Edit. Vol. I. p. 381. Wotton
 of *Chymical Principles*, Fol. of Learning, p. 191.

(7) Dr.

inhabitants of the metropolis; and you scarce ever read a description of an earthquake any where without particular notice of it. It was observed so long ago as in *Isaiah's* time, for he mentions the great noise as well as the earthquake. (XXIX. 6.) "Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire."

One of the noblest discoveries of the modern philosophy is the plurality of worlds; so that no person who hath in the least considered these matters, questions now but the planets are all inhabited, and every fixed star is a sun with other planets moving round it, as the planets of this our system move about the sun. And nothing raises in us higher ideas, sublimer sentiments of the works of God, nothing more opens and enlarges the hearts and capacities of men. But what now if you should find a hint of this in scripture? I cannot well see how the passage can be understood without supposing it; at least it cannot with so much truth and propriety. (Psal. VIII. 3, 4.) "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?" "What is man?" why certainly man is more worth than all the stars and heavens, if they are without intelligent beings to inhabit them. One living, rational,
S 3 immortal

immortal soul is of infinitely greater value than millions of worlds of inanimate, senseless, dead matter, nay than all the matter of the universe. Where then is the justness or reason of the psalmist's admiration, unless he supposed there were other rational creatures besides man, who might claim the regard of providence as well or better than he? Where is the wonder that *man* should be visited, if there were not other intelligent beings besides man; or why should the moon and the stars, which without animate creatures to inhabit them are no more than systems of dead matter, be thought more considerable than he?

Other texts there are which contain the greatest truths in nature as well as in religion. Such as this, (Acts XVII. 28.) "In God we live, and move, and have our being;" and this, (Matt. X. 29, 30.) "Not a sparrow falleth on the ground without our Father; Yea the very hairs of our head are all numbered:" and a philosophical discourse might be written upon each of them, to demonstrate the truth and necessity of a continual universal providence, extending to the least things as well as the greatest.

As the scriptures give us the most probable account of the *creation* and *beginning* of things, so they do likewise of their *consummation*; and assure us that as the earth was formed out of *water*, so will it be destroyed by *fire*. It is not only asserted by St. Peter (2 Pet. III. 7, &c.)

“ The heavens and the earth which are now
“ are reserved unto fire against the day of judg-
“ ment, in the which the heavens shall pass
“ away with a great noise, and the elements
“ shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also
“ and the works that are therein shall be burn-
“ ed up :” but the notion also prevailed among
the Heathens, as we may learn from Ovid,
without citing other testimonies :

*Esse quoque in fatis reminiscitur affore tempus,
Quo mare, quo tellus, correptaque regia coeli
Ardeat, et mundi moles operosa laboret.*

Met. I. 256.

Remembring, in the fates, a time, when fire,
Should to the battlements of heaven aspire,
And all his blazing worlds above should burn,
And all the inferior globe to cinders turn.

Dryden.

After which general conflagration there will be
“ new heavens and a new earth wherein dwell-
“ eth righteousness.” And philosophers are
so far from denying or questioning these truths,
that (7) some have even attempted to show how
all these changes may be effected. We cannot
indeed pretend to say, that the rudiments of all
science are comprised in the scriptures. They
were plainly written with another end and de-
sign, for our instruction in moral and divine
matters, and not for the improvement of arts
and

(7) Dr. Burnet, Whiston, &c.

(8) Lord

and sciences. It is enough that they teach nothing contrary to the true philosophy; and not only teach nothing contrary to the true philosophy, but mutually confirm it and are confirmed by it in several instances, and some of those discoveries which are so much boasted of by the moderns were not wholly unknown to the ancients.

“Beware” therefore “lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” They are only *minute* philosophers who are sceptics and infidels. The greatest philosophers have ever been friends to religion: And indeed a little wit and malice will suffice to raise objections; it is a mark of superior knowledge and understanding to be able to lay them. Consider who have been the most eminent philosophers, and see whether they have not also been believers and defenders of revelation, studyers of scripture as well as of nature, followers of God in his word as well as in his works. There are *four* particularly whom I choose to instance in, not only on account of their eminency, but also because the sceptic cannot here object priestcraft, or pretend that religion was their trade and profession.

The *first* was (8) the most universal genius, that perhaps ever appeared in this country or
in

(8) Lord Bacon,

(9) Mr.

in any other. He made the laws of his country his particular study, and was promoted by his superior merit in his profession to the highest civil employment in the state; but his active comprehensive soul was not confined and limited there; he ranged through all arts and sciences, showed wherein they were defective, chalked out the method how they might be improved, and *the advancement of learning* that hath been made since his days, hath been made chiefly in pursuance of his schemes, by treading in his footsteps, and tracing and deducing the rivers whereof he discovered the springs and sources. His writings, the principal of them being written in the learned language, have done infinite honor to the nation: and in all of them, even those which are not professedly written upon divine subjects, there is yet a great spirit of piety and religion, and we plainly see his reverence for the scriptures by his frequent allusions to them and citations from them. His noted axiom was that "a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth mens minds about to religion:" and he placeth theology at the head of all learning as the highest attainment and perfection of human nature.

The *second* was (9) of a noble family, and applied himself chiefly to experimental philosophy:

(9) Mr. Boyle.

(1) Mr.

losofhy : and what was the consequence of his searches into nature, but having a more profound reverence for the God of nature? It is related of him, that he never mentioned the name of God without a solemn pause in his discourse; so far was he from treating it lightly and irreverently; so full was his mind of pious awe and veneration. Amidst his numerous philosophical writings he found time also to write upon religious subjects. He wrote a treatise particularly of *the excellency of theology compared with natural philosophy*, and another of *the stile of the scriptures* with admiration and rapture. He was at the expense of large impressions of the bible and translations into several languages for the use of the poor both at home and abroad. Having employed his whole life in doing good, he extended his benevolence and charities to mankind after his death, and founded an annual lecture with a handsome salary for the proof of natural and revealed religion against atheists, deists, and all other infidels whomsoever.

The *third* was (1) a most excellent metaphysician, and inquired particularly into the powers and limits of the *human understanding*, an author happy in a wonderfully clear vein of thinking and reasoning, drew his materials not so much from books as from his own thoughts and reflections, and knew how to dress those thoughts

(1) Mr. Locke.

(2) Sir

thoughts and reflections in easy agreeable language; a friend to liberty both civil and religious, but an advocate for revelation, wrote largely of *the reasonableness of Christianity*, made a most excellent *paraphrase* and *annotations* on the principal of St. Paul's epistles, wherein he hath done more towards clearing and explaining their sense and meaning than any commentator, I had almost said than all the commentators before him: and doubtless would have obliged us with more such writings if he had lived longer, having dedicated the remainder of his days wholly and solely to these studies.

The *fourth* was (2) a prodigy indeed of mathematical knowledge. "There was none like him before him," and it may be questioned whether after him there will any "arise like unto him." It is said by Dr. Keill that if all philosophy and mathematics were considered as consisting of ten parts, nine of them are entirely of his discovery and invention. And his modesty, humility, and other virtues were as great and conspicuous as his learning and knowledge. He spoke always of the Supreme Being in a manner becoming a philosopher, attempted to settle *the chronology* of ancient kingdoms conformable to scripture, and wrote *observations* on some of the most difficult parts of holy writ, *the prophecies of Daniel and St. John's Revelation*, making thus the word of God the port and haven of all his labors, and doing

(2) Sir Isaac Newton.

doing as every wise man should, beginning with philosophy and ending in religion.

Some of these great men might perhaps entertain some singular opinions; (as indeed what great geniuses are without some singular opinions?) but in the general they were hearty friends to religion, firm believers of the Christian revelation, and recommended it by their lives as well as by their writings. And are not such instances sufficient to overwhelm all infidelity with shame and confusion? How can men pretend philosophy as the ground of their unbelief, when the greatest philosophers, for that very reason because they were the greatest philosophers, were such learned advocates for religion? No true philosopher can be an infidel; no infidel can be a true philosopher. Wherefore to conclude as St. Paul concludes his first Epistle to Timothy, "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science falsely so called, which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with you, Amen."

OCCASIONAL SERMONS.

I.

**On FORMS of PRAYER, and particularly those
of the CHURCH of ENGLAND:**

A

S E R M O N

Preached in the

Parish Church of St. MARY-LE-BOW,

**According to the last Will of Mr. JOHN HUTCHINS,
Citizen and Goldsmith,**

On St. MARK's-DAY, 1745.

When there was a Collection for the Charity Children.

T O

Mr. SAMUEL SANDEFORTH, TREASURER.

Mr. Thomas Leach,	Mr. William Caldwell,
Mr. Thomas Paris,	Mr. James Dobson,
Mr. John Drinkwater,	Mr. Henry Oldham,
Mr. Thomas Brunskell,	Mr. Thomas Cheffon,
Mr. John Whiting,	Mr. Gabriel Sleath,
Mr. Henry Clarke,	Mr. John Blackall,
Mr. Soper Hayter,	Mr. Michael Martindale,
Mr. Leonard Pead,	

CITIZENS and TRUSTEES of Mr. HUTCHINS's
CHARITY.

GENTLEMEN,

WHEN I had preached this sermon at Your desire, You were very importunate with me to publish it. I deferred it, in hopes that You would think better of it; but upon Your continued application it is given up to You; and I wish only, that it may prove as satisfactory to the Readers, as You said it was to You, and the rest of the Hearers.

Let me now in my turn request of You, to shew Your zeal and affection for the church of England, now especially in these times of danger and trouble, by a constant and devout attendance upon its worship and service. Other means are to be employed in our defense besides religion, but without religion all other means will be ineffectual. They, who best discharge their duty to God, will best fulfil their other obligations of loyalty to their King, and love to their Country. And in this confidence of You I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most faithful and obedient Servant,

Thomas Newton.

S E R M O N I.

L U K E XI. 1.

—Lord teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

P RAYER is a duty necessarily arising from the relation of man to God; and public prayer is as much our duty, as we are members of society, as private prayer is our duty, as we are individual and single persons. That we should therefore pray unto God, all who have any sense of religion are agreed; but they differ greatly as to the matter and manner of their petitions. There is an excellent dialogue in (1) Plato between Socrates and Alcibiades, wherein is shown the great difficulty of framing our petitions so, as they may prove acceptable to God and beneficial to ourselves; and Socrates, sensible of the defects of natural reason, infers from thence the necessity of divine revelation, and expresses his hopes and expectations, that some divine person would be sent from heaven to teach and instruct us as in other parts of our duty, so particularly in the exercise of our devotions. The disciples of our Lord

(1) Alcibiades secundus five Deprecatione.

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Lord were conscious of the same wants and infirmities; and therefore they apply themselves to him, that he would "teach them to pray" as John also taught his disciples." Our Saviour teaches them accordingly; and in them hath taught us not only the true object of worship but also the best method of worshipping him, not only what petitions we are to offer at the throne of grace, but also the form and manner wherein we are to offer them. And yet there are men, who pretend to be so much wiser than the rest of mankind, as to want none of these assistances and instructions; they are for pouring out their spirit in extemporary prayer, and utterly condemn all set forms: And even of those, who may approve set forms of prayer, some may yet disapprove the forms prescribed in our liturgy, and imagin that others more convenient and proper may be substituted in their place. For our own vindication and satisfaction therefore in points of such importance we will first attempt to prove *the lawfulness and expediency of set forms of prayer in general*, and secondly endeavor to show *the excellency of our own form in particular*; if not to convince our adversaries, yet at least to justify ourselves in the use of it.

First we are to prove *the lawfulness and expediency of set forms of prayer in general*. And for the sake of brevity as much as of order, our proofs shall be reduced to two kinds, and shall be drawn partly from the *authority of scripture*,

scripture, and partly from the *reason* of the thing.

1. We have the *authority* of *scripture* plainly on our side, and what better authority can we desire? Are any of our modern sectaries wiser than Solomon? but he in his directions for our behaviour in the house of God, forbids all long extemporary prayers; (Eccles. V. 2.) “Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few.” And much to the same purpose the son of Sirach exhorts us; (Ecclus XVIII. 23.) “Before thou prayest, prepare thyself, and be not as one that tempteth the Lord.” In the law of Moses the form is prescribed, wherein the priests should bless the people. As the people stood in need always of the same blessing, so was it to be implored always in the same words; (Numb. VI. 24, &c.) “The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee, the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace;” which very form of blessing we still retain in the Communion-office, and in the order for the Visitation of the sick. In like manner the form of blessing at the removing and resting of the ark, (Numb. X. 35, 36.) the form of prayer for the expiation of an uncertain murder, (Deut. XXI. 7, 8, 9.) the form of confession

feffion and prayer of him who offereth the basket of first-fruits and of him who giveth his third year's tithes (Deur. XXVI. 3, &c.) are all prescribed and appointed in the law; and would such forms have been appointed, if all forms were unlawful? But we need not insist upon single proofs, when we can produce a whole book together. For was not the book of psalms composed for the service of the temple? And is not this evident from the titles and inscriptions of most of the psalms themselves? And can you suppose that the "man after God's own heart" was ignorant of the true manner of worshipping him? Nay not only that David, but the whole Jewish church were in an error from the beginning to the end?

But you may conceive that this imperfect way of worship was proper only for that imperfect dispensation of the Jews; you may imagin that it favors altogether of their "beggarly elements," and there should be no such restraint and imposition upon the spirit of Christians. But how then cometh it to pass, that John the Baptist delivers a form of prayer to his disciples, as the Jewish masters and doctors had also done before him to their disciples? And why is our Saviour so far from reprehending, that he follows his example? Would our Saviour have given a set form of prayer to his disciples, if a set form had been any stinting of devotion? Or rather would he have done it, unless it had been an help to devotion? And much

much more would he have repeated and recommended the same form *twice*, at different times and upon different occasions? As Joseph said unto Pharaoh, (Gen. XLI. 32.) "The dream " was doubled because the thing is established " by God;" so may it be said in this case, the prayer was doubled, was repeated twice, that it might be established, and together with it the lawfulness and expediency of set forms of prayer might be evinced and established beyond all reasonable doubt and contradiction. Nor were there ever any christians, who questioned and opposed the use of set forms of prayer, till a century or two ago. The universal practice of the church from the earliest ages, which is the best interpreter of scripture, hath constantly favored it.

Nor secondly let it be pretended, that though scripture be for us yet reason is against us; for we have the *reason* of the *thing* on our side as plainly as the authority of scripture. A prescribed form of worship is not subject to the same inconveniences with extemporary effusions. The great danger of unpremediated prayer is, lest it should degenerate into a rhapsody of absurdities and enthusiasm; and he must be an uncommon and powerful master indeed of thought and expression, who is able to speak on a sudden and yet speak nothing improper in an address to the majesty of heaven. A man should be ashamed of appearing with such indigested crudities before his earthly
T 2 sovran,

soveran, or indeed before any person of understanding. But if there should be nothing absurd and unbecoming, yet the audience must first endeavor to understand the words ; and then they must weigh and consider the sense and meaning ; and then they must deliberate whether such requests are proper for persons in their condition, before they can lawfully join in them ; and by that time the minister is passed on to some other subject, which requires the like attention and consideration ; and so their curiosity may be raised, and they may exercise their judgment, but there can be scarce any room left for devotion.

As a precomposed form of prayer is not subject to the same inconveniences with extemporary effusions, so neither is it liable itself to any just objections. It is so far from obstructing or quenching our devotion as is pretended, that it rather assists and inflames it ; the matter and the words are both prepared to our hands, we know before what is to follow that we may lawfully join in it, and no other attention is required but to raise our affections. And let me ask, is not the spirit of the congregation equally stunted whether the minister pray in an extemporary or in a composed regular form ? And which is the more fit and proper for the people to receive a form of prayer from the wisdom and authority of the whole church, or to depend upon the discretion of every single minister ?

But

But a precomposed form of prayer is not only liable to no just objection; but hath besides several advantages to recommend it. It is more for the honor of almighty God, expresses more reverence and devotion, preserves greater propriety and decency of language, and in short surpasses extemporary prayer, as much as sound policy and religion exceed the freaks and rants of fanaticism and enthusiasm. It is likewise more for the edification of men as well as for the honor of God; for who can question, which is likely to be most instructive and edifying, hasty conceptions, or studied compositions; the thoughts of one, perhaps illiterate, man thrown out without premeditation, or the wisdom of the church prepared and digested into form and order? It is better not only for the people, but for the ministers too; for as it prevents any vain ostentation of their talents in the more learned, so it supplies the more ignorant with what perhaps they could ill compose of themselves; for in every profession there are always some of inferior genius and capacity, and it is good for these to have such a provision made for them. Moreover it better establishes and secures the unity of faith and worship; hinders the heretodox from infusing their particular notions in their prayers, which is perhaps the most artful and plausible way of infusing them; reduces all the churches to an uniformity, prevents any disagreement or contradiction in

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their petitions, and instructs them, as they worship the same God, to worship him with the same mind and voice. Finally it is showing to all the world the terms of our communion, and giving them a fair opportunity to examin them before they join in it; whereas if there be no stated regular forms, we must have a sort of implicit faith in every minister, assent we know not why and pray for we know not what, just as his temper or interest or caprice or passions shall prompt or incite him. And this you may absurdly call praying by the spirit if you please, but every wise man will say with the Apostle, (1 Cor. XIV. 15.) "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also."

It is easy to say more, but we hope that enough hath been said, to prove *the lawfulness and expediency of set forms of prayer in general*, and we shall now, as it was proposed in the second place, endeavor to show *the excellency of our own form in particular*. Not that a particular examination of all the beauties in our liturgy, or a particular answer to all the objections which have been made against it, can be proposed or expected in one of these discourses. These things have been done to satisfaction again and again by several learned men, and the books are in every one's hands. Our time will allow us only to make some general reflections.

I. It

1. It will very much recommend our liturgy to consider *how* and by *whom* it was composed, that it was not the production of this or that man, but the result of the wisdom of our governors both in church and state. The compilers of it were not only the best and wisest men of that age in this nation, but they consulted likewise the most eminent of the divines abroad, and had their approbation of it, and approved it yet farther themselves by dying in its defense. And since that time it hath received some corrections and improvements; and though no work of man can pretend to perfection, yet it hath perhaps as few imperfections as any whatever. In theory possibly it may seem easy to correct and amend it, but it hath been found and will be found extremely difficult in practice. None of those who have attempted it, have succeeded in their attempts.

2. It is another recommendation of our liturgy, that it is drawn up in *our own mother-tongue*; so that we may all understand it with ease and attend to it with pleasure. In this respect as well as in others our church is truly primitive and apostolical; for when were prayers in an unknown tongue first introduced into the church, and what was the occasion of introducing them? Was it not because the Romans still retained their Latin service, after the Latin language was lost among them by the course of time and inundation of barbarous

nations? It is true indeed that God understands our petitions in any language; and he understands as well the breathings of our hearts, if we pray in no language at all. The design of our prayers is not to inform Omniscience, but to acknowledge our own independence; but how can they properly be said to be *our prayers*, if we do not join in them? And how can we be said to join in them, if we neither understand the sense nor the words? (1 Cor. XIV. 11.) "If I know not the meaning of the voice I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me." It is a happiness therefore that our service is such as all may join in it, because all understand it; and herein we particularly follow the precept of the Apostle, (1 Cor. XIV. 26.) "Let all things be done to edifying."

3. It recommendeth our liturgy yet more, that it was composed principally out of *scripture* or out of *ancient liturgies* and *fathers*. There are not only several parts and passages borrowed entire, as particularly the Lord's prayer, and the psalms and lessons in their monthly and yearly course, and St. Ambrose's hymn called *Te Deum* and the prayer of St. Chrysostom, and the like: But even where entire parts and passages are not borrowed, and the very words of scripture or of fathers are not taken or applied, yet their spirit and manner, their stile and character are still preserved; and

and perhaps there is scarce any collect in our liturgy, scarce any sentiment or expression that may not be justified by the authority of one or other of them. And what a comfort and satisfaction should it be to us, that we are such a sound part of the holy catholic church, that we thus maintain the communion of saints, that we worship God in the same manner as the martyrs and confessors and best of christians did in the purest ages; and the spirit of their liturgies, like Elijah's upon Elisha, (2 Kings II. 9.) hath descended in "a double portion" upon Ours.

4. It is a farther recommendation of it, that our prayers are addressed to the *proper object* through the *proper mediator*, to the one God through, (1 Tim. II. 5.) the "one mediator between God and men the man Christ Jesus." Each collect begins with a solemn invocation of the one, and concludes with the prevailing merits and intercession of the other. In this instance again our church is truly primitive and apostolical, and hath purged away the dregs of later times. For look into the Roman missals and manuals of devotion, and you will find as many prayers directed to the Virgin Mary as to God himself, as many offered through the mediation of saints and angels, as of the Son of God himself. And yet it is certain, that nothing can be more contrary to the doctrine of scripture, or a greater deviation from the practice of the catholic church
for

for more than three centuries at least after Christ. Let us congratulate ourselves therefore, that our worship is restored to its genuine simplicity and purity. Rome Christian as well as Rome Pagan may have (1 Cor. VIII. 6.)

“ Gods many and Lords many, but to us
 “ there is but one God the father of whom
 “ are all things and we in him ; and one Lord
 “ Jesus Christ by whom are all things, and
 “ we by him.”

5. It is besides a great excellence of our service to have so *many short distinct* petitions, and renders them more fit and easy to be remembered and repeated. Our liturgy in this respect may be compared to a string of pearls, every one valuable but altogether almost inestimable. If the whole was disposed in one continued prayer, though it should not be tedious, yet it would keep our minds upon the stretch too long together ; whereas these breaks and pauses give relief, our souls recover breath as it were, and we return to worship again with new spirit and vigor. Brevity is a beauty in all sorts of composition, and especially when man is addressing himself to God. Long prayers are too much like *preaching* to God Almighty. Sure we are that the Lord's prayer, which was designed to be a standard and model for all others, is short as it is comprehensive ; and you know not whether to admire it more for its fulness or its brevity.

6. The

6. The *variety* of our service is another excellence in the composition of it, and contributes much to the keeping up of our attention and devotion. A sameness in any thing soon fatiates and wearies us; and it is as difficult to keep the mind as it is the body, long in one posture. But by the beautiful intermixture of prayer and praise, of supplication and thanksgiving, of confession and absolution, of hymns and creeds, of psalms and lessons, our weariness is relieved, our attention is renewed, and we are led on agreeably from one subject to another, and by means of the variety are scarcely sensible of the length of our service. The frame of our liturgy is somewhat like the frame of the world; it is order in variety, and though all the parts are different, yet the whole is consistent and regular.

7. What renders it yet more excellent is its *comprehensiveness*, including all that we can want or desire. The exhortation of the Apostle is religiously observed; (1 Tim. II. 1, 2.) and “supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks are made for all men, for kings and for all that are in authority.” Indeed there is nothing that relates either to ourselves or others, nothing that concerns us either as men or members of society, nothing that conduces to our happiness in this world or the world to come, but is comprehended in some or other of the petitions. A form of prayer
for

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for general use could not well be made more particular; and it is easy, while the minister is reading it, with a sudden glance of thought to appropriate and apply any passages to ourselves and our own case. A great deal is expressed, but more is implied; and our devotions in our closets and in our families we cannot perhaps better express than in the words of our liturgy, it is so suited to all ranks and conditions, and adapted to all wants and occasions.

8. The congregation have particular reason to be pleased, as they have a *larger share* in our service than in any other whatever: and the minister and people mutually raise and inflame each other's devotion. In the church of Rome the congregation are so far from having any share in the service, that they do not so much as understand it; but the priest mutters over his Latin prayers to himself, and the people every one of their particular prayers to themselves; and so they depart some sooner and some later, just as they happen to have finished their devotions. And among our protestant dissenters there is commonly one long-winded tedious extemporary prayer; the people are only hearers, and they must hear before they can understand, and they must understand before they can approve, and they must approve before they can join in any petition, all which is impossible to be done in an instant while one is speaking. It is a singular privilege therefore, that our people enjoy, of bearing so large a
part

part in our service; and it is this that properly denominates ours, what really none else is, a book of *Common Prayer*.

In a word our liturgy is in every respect excellently contrived and fitted to promote true devotion. The language is so plain as to be level to the capacities of the meanest, and yet the sense so noble as to raise the conceptions of the greatest. The *manner* too, in which our service is performed, is worthy of the *matter*; our churches plain and solemn, neither painted and adorned like a theatre on the one hand, nor yet entirely unadorned like a common room on the other; our vestments suitable and becoming, and the very emblem of holiness, for as St. John saith, (Rev. XIX. 8.) "the fine
"linen clean and white is the righteousness of
"saints;" our ceremonies neither too many nor too few, such as may excite and cherish and not such as may distract and dissipate our devotion. All things are done, as the Apostle would have them done, (1 Cor. XIV. 40.) "decently and in order;" and if our piety is not eminent and conspicuous in proportion to our advantages, it is because we are wanting to ourselves, not because our church hath been wanting in making proper provision for us.

As we have therefore such an excellent form of prayer, let us reverence it accordingly; resort to it frequently; attend to it devoutly; accompany it not only with our lips but with our hearts; repeat what we are to repeat, and
answer

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answer where we are to answer, but never incroach upon another's office, never repeat the absolution after the minister, never say our prayers aloud to disturb the rest of the congregation; join in every prayer with our mind, and in every amen with our voice, and in all respects behave like those who are in the more immediate presence of God; and then will (Psal. XIX, 14.) "the words of our mouths
"and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord our strength
"and our redeemer." And to this duty methinks we should need no other exhortation than that of the Psalmist; and if we will not do it for love let us do it for fear; (Psal. XCVI. 9.) "O worship the Lord in the
"beauty of holiness, fear before him all the
"earth."

But love is a more generous principle than fear: and how thankful ought we to be to our heavenly Father for having brought us up in the bosom of the best and purest church upon earth? and how can we be duly sensible of our own happiness without being desirous to communicate it to others? and what a pious and charitable work therefore is this of Yours in educating so many young children in the principles of the church of England, who might otherwise be made a prey to a false religion, or abandoned to no religion? Go on then in the beneficent design that You have undertaken; it is a sort of godlike office,

“ out of the mouths of babes and sucklings
“ to ordain strength, and perfect praise :” And
(2 Cor. IX. 7.) “ every man according as he
“ purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not
“ grudgingly or of necessity ; for God loveth
“ a cheerful giver.” What christian can have
the heart to refuse, when he remembers those
memorable words of our blessed Saviour ?
(Matt. XVIII. 5.) “ Whoso shall receive one
“ such little child in my name, receiveth
“ me.” And again, (Matt. XXV. 40.) “ Ve-
“ rily I say unto You, In as much as ye have
“ done it unto one of the least of these my
“ brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

S E R M O N II.

PHARISAISM and POPERY paralleled:

Preached in the Parish Church of St. MARY-
LE-BOW, and GROSVENOR Chapel, on oc-
casion of the present Rebellion, October
1745. Published at the particular Request
of several of the Audience.

M A T T. XXIII. 13.

Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.

ABUNDANCE of exhortations and re-
proofs there are in scripture, which
though directed to particular persons, are yet
of general use and importance. Even those
passages, which seem to be more peculiarly
adapted to certain persons and certain times,
may yet afford instruction to all persons and
all times. And of this kind particularly is
our Saviour's discourse in the XXIII^d chapter
of St. Matthew, which though pointed di-
rectly at the Scribes and Pharisees, may yet
serve for a perpetual warning against the vices
of all those who shall tread in their steps. The
Scribes were the great doctors and expounders
of the Jewish law; and because they were
usually of the sect of the Pharisees, therefore
the

the Scribes and Pharisees are so frequently joined together in scripture: And because they did (ver. 5.) "all their works to be seen of men," because they (Matt. XV. 8.) "honoured God with their lips" while "their hearts were far from him," therefore our Saviour calleth them *hypocrites*. "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites." He observes that they (ver. 2, 3.) "sit in Moses' seat," but then "they say and do not:" As persons in authority they might be obeyed, but as examples they were by no means to be followed. He denounces eight severe woes against them; and I wish among Christians there may not be some sitting *in cathedra* too, to whom these woes as properly appertain, as ever they did to the Scribes and Pharisees themselves. Let us take a view of them in the order, wherein they lie in the chapter, and see whether the vices of those times are not to be paralleled now. At least it will be of some use and service to point out the rocks and shelves upon which the Scribes and Pharisees (1 Tim. I. 19.) "made shipwrack of faith and a good conscience," that so we may the more cautiously avoid them. For these things were written not for their sakes, but (1 Cor. X. 11.) "for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come."

I. The first woe denounced against them is for their (ver. 13.) "shutting up the kingdom of heaven against men, neither going
VOL. III. U " in

“ in themselves, nor suffering them that were
 “ entering to go in.” They “ shut up the
 “ kingdom of heaven against men,” they did
 all they could to debar men from the true re-
 ligion, neither embracing it themselves, nor
 suffering others, who would have embraced
 it, to embrace it. St. Luke expresseth it more
 particularly by their (Luke XI. 52.) “ taking
 “ away the key of knowlege: they entered
 “ not in themselves, and them that were en-
 “ tering in they hindered.” We must un-
 derstand, that at the admission of a Jewish
 doctor a book and a key were given him, im-
 porting that he should unlock and open, that
 he should interpret and explain the law of
 God to the people. It is in allusion to this
 ceremony, that our Saviour saith, that the
 Scribes and Pharisees had “ taken away the
 “ key of knowlege,” that they had not duly
 opened and explained the law of God to the
 people, particularly with relation to the Mes-
 siah. They had corrupted the true and genuin
 sense of things by their false glosses and in-
 terpretations; and in numberless instances had
 (Mark VII. 13.) “ made the word of God
 “ of none effect by their traditions.” And
 now if there be any called Christians, who
 thus “ take away the key of knowlege,” and
 “ shut up the kingdom of heaven against
 “ men,” neither holding the truth them-
 selves, nor permitting others, who would ex-
 amin things, to examin them, who would
 profess

profess the truth, to profess it; will not this woe as properly belong to them, as ever it did to the Scribes and Pharisees? Every body, who heareth me, must immediately reflect upon the bishops and clergy of the church of Rome, whose practice this is, of not permitting their members, who would examin things, to examin them; a practice notorious to all, and denied by none. They not only perform their public prayers and the service of God in an unknown tongue; but will not even allow the people so much as to read the scripture without a license from their superiors, the bishops or inquisitors. This license they grant as a particular favor, and never but at the recommendation of the priest or confessor, and when they are pretty secure of the person to whom they grant it. And then, when they allow the scripture to be read, they will allow it to be read only in their own translations, and guarded and fenced with their own annotations. Here in England perhaps they may be a little more indulgent, where they are only upon sufferance, and have not their people in such subjection: But where their's is the established religion, and they have the power in their hands, there whosoever presumes to read the scripture without leave is denied absolution, and in some countries it is well if he be not thrown into the prison of the Inquisition. It would make the people some amends for such a ma-

nifest abuse, if they instructed them in their duty by other means; but they have nothing of the body and substance of morality or divinity in their sermons and discourses: They “build” them (if I may thus apply a metaphor from St. Paul) (1 Cor. III. 12.) with the “hay” and “stubble” of their legends and schoolmen, and not with the “silver” and “gold” of Moses and the Prophets or of Christ and his Apostles. They eclipse and extinguish as much as they can the light of scripture, and set up the *ignis fatuus* of tradition in its stead. There is no need of arguments to expose such a practice. It is so contrary to all the principles of reason, so repugnant to the natural rights of mankind, so destructive of the very end and design for which the scripture was given, that the absurdity, the tyranny, the irreligion of it sufficiently expose themselves: And really one knoweth not which to wonder at most, the cruelty and arrogance of their clergy for acting in this manner, or the tameness and stupidity of their laity in suffering it.

2. The next woe denounced against the Scribes and Pharisees is for (ver. 14.) “devouring widows houses” and at the same time “for a pretence making long prayers.” They were very sanctified in appearance, but in reality they oppressed the widows and fatherless. They made their prayers of an intolerable length, and by these means imposed upon

upon the credulity and superstition of (2 Tim. III. 6.) “filly women.” A learned commentator (Whitby) says that they continued their prayers sometimes for three hours, and perhaps sold them as the Roman priests do their masses. Now it is certain the Roman priests are not only seemingly very religious and really very extortionate, but are extortionate by the means of religion, and make their prayers and masses the grand pretence for their exactions. One of the greatest funds of the church is the money they draw from disconsolate widows to pray the souls of their husbands and children out of purgatory. So literally true it is, that “they devour the widows houses and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore they shall receive the greater damnation.”

3. The third woe denounced against the Scribes and Pharisees is for (ver. 15.) “passing sea and land to make one profelyte, and when he is made making him two-fold more the child of hell than themselves.”

To illustrate this text commentators cite a passage out of (1) Justin Martyr, wherein he says, that the profelytes do not only not believe, but even two-fold more than you (speaking to the Jews) blaspheme the name of Jesus. And generally we may observe that

(1) Οἱ δὲ ἀποστολικοὶ οὐ μόνον αὐτὸ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Christi scilicet, πιστεύουσι ἀλλὰ διπλοῦτερον ὑμῶν (Justin apud Grotius. See Whitby too.) βλασφημοῦσιν εἰς

the converts to any religion are greater zealots for it than those who were born and bred up in it, I suppose the better to show the sincerity of their conversion, and to recommend themselves the more effectually to their new masters and companions. Now the diligence of the Roman priests and missionaries in compassing sea and land to make proselytes is not at all inferior to that of the Scribes and Pharisees. It is really a distinguishing part of their character, and I wish the present times did not afford such melancholy proofs of it. But this we may say, it is owing to our weakness and not to their own strength, that they prevail. While we are asleep, they sow their tares. If we would but awake, we should find their best arguments no stronger than the green withs upon Sampson's hands; but while we lie sleeping in the lap of Delilah, (Judg. XVI.) in luxury and pleasure, they cut off our hair and deprive us of our strength. It is indeed among the poorer sort chiefly that they prevail by bribes, which they call charities. They do not so properly make converts, as purchase them: and as (Acts VIII. 20.) "Simon Magus thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money;" so they make merchandise and simony of souls, and buy them into their communion. It is true this method doth little honor to them, but it is the more dangerous to us, as it is in a manner *inlister* men into their service; for every convert they make

make is not only the loss of a member to the church, but of a subject to the king, the new converts, as we observed, being commonly greater bigots, and "two-fold more the children of hell" than those who convert them.

4. The fourth woe denounced against the Scribes and Pharisees is for their vain distinctions of *oaths* (ver. 16, &c.) what were binding and what were not, when they were all alike obligatory. And will not this again put us in mind of the schoolmen and casuists of the church of Rome, so remarkable for splitting of hairs, and making of distinctions where there is no difference? They know how to dispense with the necessity of keeping faith with hereticks. They can instruct people how to take an oath without any intention of fulfilling it, or after they have taken it can invent subterfuges and evasions, loosen the most solemn ties and engagements, discharge kings from their duty to their subjects, and absolve subjects from their allegiance to their king and country. They are the masters of the whole art of equivocations and mental reservations; and can exactly define and distinguish how a man may falsify without lying, and forswear himself without perjury. The "Scribes and Pharisees hypocrites" were nothing to them in these respects. The copy here infinitely surpasses the original.

5. The fifth woe denounced against the Scribes and Pharisees (ver. 23.) is for "pay-

“ing tithe of mint and anise and cummin,” for being superstitious and precise in the little rituals and ceremonials of religion, and at the same time “omitting the weightier matters of “the law, judgment” or justice, “mercy” or charity, “and faith” or trust “in” God, (Micah VI. 8.) “walking humbly with God,” as it is in the prophet Micah, (Luke XI. 42.) “the love of God” as it is in the parallel place of St. Luke. And will not this denunciation affect all such christians, as are scrupulously observant of positive institutions, and at the same time negligent of moral duties? And will it not more particularly affect those christians, who are wonderfully exact in counting their beads and muttering over so many Ave Mary’s; but make no scruple of fomenting rebellions, blowing up parlements, overturning kingdoms, and massacring a whole people? who would not for ever so much violate a vow of chastity by marriage, but are not so nice and tender in violating the same by fornication or adultery? who are very circumstantial in their forms and ceremonies, their crossings and gesticulations at the altar; but esteem it no manner of sacrilege to take away “the cup of “blessing,” and “the communion of the “blood of Christ” from the people? who will hardly and not without imposing severe penances absolve a man from the least offense committed against their holy mother the church; but in other cases are as loose confessors,

fessors, as in these they are strict and rigid, and provided a man be but a zealot for their religion and rich withal and bountiful to churches and monasteries, they have store of pardons and indulgences for him, and though he hath lived ever so profligate he may die in peace? Surely it may be said to such men with the greatest truth and justice, (ver. 24.) "Ye blind guides, who strain at a gnat, but swallow a camel."

6. The sixth woe denounced against the Scribes and Pharisees is for their (ver. 25.) "making clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but being within full of extortion and excess, full of ravening and wickedness," as St. Luke expresseth it (XI. 39.) The Pharisees were very superstitious and exact in their washings and purifications; the "Pharisees wash oft," says St. Mark (VII. 3, 4.) "holding the tradition of the elders; and many other things there be which they have received to hold as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels and of tables." And are not the papists likewise very superstitious and exact in their washing and sprinkling of themselves and the things which belong to them with their holy water? It would be ridiculous even to recite the wonderful virtues, which they attribute to this holy water, and the many superstitious uses to which they apply it. They hardly ever go into or out of a church, but they are sprinkled with some of it,

it. On solemn days the priest attends to perform that office, and at other times they serve themselves with it from a font placed near the church-door for that purpose, like one of our fonts for baptism. Thus do they like the Pharisees "make clean the outside of the cup" and of the platter;" and whether they are not "within" too, like the Pharisees, "full" of extortion and excess, of ravening and "wickedness," let their whole religion declare, which seemeth calculated for nothing else but to oppress the liberty and usurp the property of mankind. Well therefore might our Saviour say, and well may we say, (ver. 26.) "Thou blind Pharisee," Thou blind Papist, "cleanse first that which is within the" cup and platter, that the outside of them "may be clean also;" sprinkle thy heart with holy water; and let the thoughts of that be good, and the works of thy hands will be good also.

27. The seventh woe denounced against the Scribes and Pharisees is for being (ver. 27.) "like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed" appear beautiful outward, but are within "full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also," says our Saviour, "outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." In short they (2 Tim. III. 5.) "had a form of godliness, but denied the power thereof;" and such there are among Christians

Christians as well as among the Jews. Particular men it is hard to judge; but it is certain no sect have more of the form and show and pageantry of religion than the Romanists; and it is to be feared none have less of the power of it, as where there are most leaves, there commonly is least fruit. I wish it is not even literally true of their religious houses, considering the magnificence of the buildings, and what things are transacted within them; I say I wish it is not even literally true, that "they appear indeed beautiful outward, but are within full of all uncleanness." It is the prerogative of God alone to know the hearts of men: but surely so many forms and ceremonies are enough to eat out the very life and substance of religion; and if all was pure and genuin, what need of so much paint and varnish? A plain neatness and simplicity in dress and behaviour is the distinguishing characteristic of the "beauty of holiness" as well as of other beauty. Its greatest ornament is to want none.

8. The last woe denounced against the Scribes and Pharisees is for their "honoring" of "dead saints," at the same time when they "persecuted" the "living." They (ver. 29, &c.) "build the tombs of the prophets, and garnished the sepulchres of the righteous," and at the same time "filled up the measure of their fathers, killing and crucifying some prophets and wise men, scourging and per-
secuting

“secuting others from city to city.” But the papists far exceed them; for they not only “build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,” but honor them with costly shrines and rich offerings, and make as many prayers and vows to them as to God, or the Son of God blessed for ever. Nor are they less uncharitable and cruel in persecuting the living, than they are fond and superstitious in honoring the dead. We need not look abroad for instances; our own annals will furnish us with pages enough written, as I may say, in characters of blood. We need not go so far as the persecutions in Germany, or the massacre in France; the butcheries in the reign of Queen Mary, the powder-plot in the reign of King James the first, and the massacre of so many thousand protestants in Ireland in the reign of his son, will stand as monuments of their cruelty, as long as ever the nation or history of England shall last. And if we should still connive at the growth of popery, and suffer their numbers to increase as they have done of late years, who can be our security, that the like bloody tragedies may not, and will not be acted again? They cannot indeed do what the Scribes and Pharisees did, “crucify the Lord of glory;” but they do as much like it as they possibly can, they persecute him in his disciples and followers, those who adhere to his doctrine, those who tread in his steps. And we know very well,

well, that the injuries done to his disciples our Saviour resents as done to himself. (Acts IX. 5.) "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," said he to Paul when he persecuted the poor christians; and in another place (whether of acts of mercy or acts of cruelty it is the same) (Matt. XXV. 40, 45.) "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me."

Thus, I think, it appears, that every woe denounced against the Scribes and Pharisees is at least equally applicable, if not more applicable, to the priests and votaries of the church of Rome. Indeed it is almost impossible to read this account of the former, without thinking at the same time of the latter. The likeness is so very great, the resemblance is so very strong, that it striketh one immediately. Nor are these the only features, wherein they resemble one another. The Pharisees (Matt. IX. 14.) "fasted oft" according to St. Matthew; and do not the papists likewise keep frequent fasts and vigils? The Pharisees, as St. Luke and St. John inform us, (Acts XXIV. 14. John VII. 49.) counted those who differed from them, "heretics" and "accursed:" and do not the papists likewise call all those *heretics* who are of a different persuasion, and exclude all protestants from all hopes of salvation? The Pharisees were strenuous assertors of the privileges and immunities of the people of God; they were always for lessening

lessening the authority of the civil magistrate, and advancing their own; they even doubted whether it was (Matt. XXII. 17.) "lawful" to pay tribute unto Cæsar or not:" and do not the popish clergy likewise plead their particular privileges and exemptions? have they not in all times endeavored to raise the power ecclesiastical upon the ruins of the civil power? History abounds with examples in this kind: but fix upon the reign of our brave Henry the second, and see whether their renowned Thomas Becket be not a saint and a martyr for the very same reasons, for which we should reckon him, and justly reckon him, a rebel to his king and a traytor to his country. The Pharisees suffered that part of the temple, which was (Mark XI. 17.) "the house of prayer for" all nations," to be made "a den of thieves:" and is it not notorious, that the papists make their churches their sanctuaries, and sanctuaries for the vilest of robbers and murderers? We have traced the comparison no farther than we have the authority of scripture; farther we might trace it: but for my part I take no great pleasure in drawing the parallel; I am more sorry that they give the occasion.

The true use and design of this discourse is not merely to expose their faults, but to expose them so as that we may avoid them; and that since the Papists and Pharisees are so like one another, we may take effectual care to be like neither. Our Saviour said to his disciples,
(Matt.

(Matt. V. 20.) "Except your righteousness
" shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes
" and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into
" the kingdom of heaven:" And what then
will He say to those Christians, who are so far
from "exceeding the righteousness of the
" Scribes and Pharisees," that they even adopt
their greatest vices and improve them?

What a horrid and impious attempt then is
this to impose popery upon us with a popish
pretender, for a popish prince would soon make
way for the popish religion, and the popish re-
ligion is attended with all these evils which you
have heard, and many more! The protestant
religion can be supported only by supporting
the protestant succession; and if it should please
God for our sins to punish us with a change—
But do not Thou, O gracious Lord God, for
the many and crying sins of this nation, deli-
ver us over into the hands of our enemies, nor
punish us according to our iniquities, but pro-
tect and prosper us after thy great mercy and
goodness.—But if it should please God for our
sins to punish us with a change, what a change
would it be! a change from liberty to slavery,
from the purest religion to the grossest idola-
try and superstition, from a mighty kingdom
to a province of France, from a flourishing
church to a servile dependence upon the see of
Rome, from the legal and mild government of
a protestant king to the arbitrary exactions and
heavy oppressions of a popish tyrant!

Nor

Nor let any be deluded with a vain notion, that he would be contented with the enjoyment of his religion, and leave us freely to exercise our own, even though he should make such a promise and declaration. They must be very willing to be deceived indeed, who can be deceived by such empty pretences. For it is the nature of that religion not to tolerate any other, but to endeavor to build and establish itself upon the ruins of all: and they will stop at nothing right or wrong for this purpose, the goodness of the end, as they think, will sanctify the most unrighteous means; and in fact there never was a popish prince, but he attempted to make his own the religion of his country, and has too often succeeded in the attempt, as Saxony, the Palatinate, and other countries once protestant, now oppressed with popery, can testify. And for any promises and protestations which such a prince may be induced to make, we know very well that he may be dispensed with to make them, and dispensed with from keeping them; it is the professed doctrine of that church, that they are not obliged to keep faith with heretics, and especially when the good of their church requires otherwise, which is superior to all other obligations.

If we have not yet learned this from their doctrines, we may learn it from their practices, and the experience of former ages. When Queen Mary was first proclaimed, she engaged

to the men of Suffolk who had been the principal instruments of her advancement to the throne, that "she would make no change or alteration in the state of religion," and declared in council that "she would use no force in matters of religion, but leave every one to enjoy liberty of conscience;" and yet every child knoweth what cruelties were afterwards committed in her reign, how many excellent bishops and martyrs were burnt at the stake, how many others were imprisoned, fined, and tortured, or fled their country, and this flourishing island became a scene of desolation and a field of blood! In like manner King James the second upon his accession declared in council (which declaration was printed and dispersed amongst the people) that "he would preserve the government in church and state as it was established by law;" nay "would always take care to defend and support the church of England." What he said to his council, he repeated again in his speech to the parliament, and in the very same words, "the better to evidence to you," says he "that I spoke them not by chance, and consequently that you may firmly rely upon a promise so solemnly made." And yet how this promise so solemnly made and his coronation oath were observed by him, no body need be told; all the world sufficiently knows and remembers.

Now can any of his *pretended descendants* give us stronger assurances than these? or are they more to be depended upon, and better to be trusted? they who have been bred up in the very bosom of Rome, and consequently are more bigotted and devoted to it, and under stronger obligations to promote its interests: they who can never succeed here without the support and assistance of our inveterate and implacable enemies, and consequently if they succeed must establish the arbitrary government of France or Spain, as well as the corrupt and cruel religion of Rome!

We may frame some judgment of their intentions and purposes by their adherents, who are nothing but a wicked crew of robbers and plunderers, or if of any religion Scotch and Irish papists. Every Englishman and Protestant must abhor such an unnatural conspiracy and rebellion; the wisest and most moderate of the Papists themselves cannot approve it; it can be favored only by the most desperate bigots of that religion among ourselves, and foreign popish servants and others, of whom it is matter of loud and general complaint that there is so great a number in the nation, and those chiefly in the best and greatest families. God give us grace and wisdom that we may
 “see the things which belong unto our peace
 “before they are hid from our eyes!” And surely you will not need any other admonition; it will be sufficient to admonish you in the
 words

words of St. Peter : (2 Pet. III. 17, 18.) " Ye
" therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these
" things before, beware lest ye also being led
" away with the error of the wicked, fall from
" your own steadfastness ; but grow in grace
" and in the knowlege of our Lord and Saviour
" Jesus Christ ; to Him be glory both now
" and for ever." Amen.

S E R M O N III.

Preached before the Honourable the House of
COMMONS, at St. MARGARET'S WEST-
MINSTER, on Wednesday, December 18,
1745. Being the day appointed by his Ma-
jesty's royal Proclamation for a General Fast.

Mercurii, 18^o Die Decembris, 1745.

Ordered,

THAT the Thanks of this House be given to the Re-
verend Dr. Newton, for the Sermon by him this day
preached before this House, at St. Margaret's Westminster;
and that he be desired to print the same; and that Lord
Carpenter and Mr. Frankland do acquaint him therewith.

N. HARDINGE, Cl. Dom' Com'

R E V. II. 5.

Remember therefore from whence thou art
fallen, and repent, and do the first works;
or else I will come unto thee quickly, and
will remove thy candlestick out of his place,
except thou repent.

IN the lesser Asia there were formerly seven
famous and flourishing churches; but they
began very early to degenerate, and several cor-
ruptions were grown up among them even in
the days of the Apostles. St. John is there-
fore commanded to write unto them, and ac-
cordingly

cordingly addresses the Revelation to them all in general, and a separate epistle to each in particular, and first to the church of Ephesus, as that was the principal, and the metropolis of the Lesser Asia. It is no ordinary message that he delivers, but he writes by the authority and in the name of Jesus, "Remember therefore
" from whence thou art fallen, and repent,
" and do the first works; or else I will come
" unto thee quickly," will visit thee speedily in judgment, "and will remove thy candle-
" stick out of his place," will take away from thee the light of the gospel which thou hast hitherto enjoyed, "except thou repent." It may reasonably be presumed, that these admonitions had for some time at least the intended effect, in reforming the manners of men, and consequently in retarding the judgments of God; but after five or six centuries, when the Christians of the East walked no longer worthy of their holy profession, and instead of growing at all better waxed daily worse and worse, it pleased God to deliver them into the hands of their enemies, the Saracens first and the Turks afterwards, who turned their churches into mosques, their worship into horrid superstition, and instead of the pure religion of Jesus which they had thus abused, forced Mohammedism upon them by arms and violence; and in this miserable condition they have continued ever since, sad monuments of God's justice, and terrible examples to all succeeding generations!

Such was the fate of the most glorious churches in the East, and let us beware lest such also be not the fate of the best and purest churches in the West. For these admonitions of the Apostle were intended for us as well as for them, and he repeats it again and again, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches;" and leaves it to us to make the proper application to ourselves. Now certainly we have enjoyed the light of the gospel as well as they, in its truest splendor and purity; and like them have fallen from our former piety and virtue. Like them too we are threatened with the heaviest of God's judgments, the loss of our pure religion and liberty, and this speedily too, unless we take the same course that was prescribed to them, to prevent it. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." Here are then two things proposed to our consideration, first the evils with which we are threatened, "I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place;" and secondly the most effectual method to prevent these evils, namely to "remember from whence we are fallen, and repent, and do the first works."

I. First,

I. First, the evils with which we are threatened are no less than the loss of all that is dear and valuable to us, both as Men and Englishmen, as Christians and Protestants. For we are now engaged in war with two of the most powerful princes in Europe, and it is not a fair and generous war that they carry on against us, but they have fomented a most unnatural rebellion among us, in order to impose a popish and abjured pretender upon the throne of these kingdoms. And if Providence for the punishment of our sins should suffer our enemies to prevail over us, one of the first things that we must expect is to be deprived of the free exercise of our holy religion, and to be compelled into the Romish communion. "Our candle-stick will" then indeed "be removed out of his place;" we shall no longer be blessed with the pure light of the gospel, but shall be condemned to the darkness of superstition: our bibles we must exchange for vain legends and traditions, our excellent liturgy for prayers in an unknown tongue; and instead of worshipping God in spirit and in truth, we must bow down to images, and worship departed saints and angels. All freedom of debate and controversy will then be taken away. Examine and prove and profess the truth you must not; that church requires implicit obedience, and allows of no toleration; you must either conform, or submit to go the stake, or to the galleys, or to prison, or be forced to fly your

native

native country. But it may be thought that the milder kind of popery may be established here as in France; but popery in any shape is terrible, and bad is the best, as appears by the cruelties exercised towards the Protestants of that kingdom in the last reign, and very lately in the present. Ask any of our French protestants or their children, and they will tell you the blessing of French popery as well as of French government. But is it not much more probable, that a native of Italy, a pupil and pensioner of the Pope, from principle, from gratitude, from interest devoted to the court of Rome, will endeavor to fix and establish popery among us in the fulness of its authority? It is sometimes indeed suggested in his commendation (and strange kind of commendation it is) that he is a person of no religion; but he is the fitter therefore to be made a bigot and the tool of bigots; and none so likely to persecute, plunder, and murder the professors of the true religion, as an infidel or an atheist. England has been long considered as a sheep gone astray, and must by all means be fetched back to the fold, and be well fleeced to make amends for so many years as she hath been lost. They therefore who have any religion, must pray against this monstrous rebellion, as they would preserve their religion in any purity; and they who have no religion, must yet wish against it, as they would not be ridden by priests, nor be liable to ecclesiastical censures.

They are too apt to say, that all religions are the same; but they would soon find and feel a very sensible difference. They would not then be suffered to neglect the service of a false church, as they do now of the true; but must be obliged to go frequently to mass and to confession. They murmur that the revenues of the church are so large; and what then will they say to the immense wealth of the Romish clergy, and their impositions and exactions for private masses, for prayers for the dead, for pardons and indulgences, for offerings to the saints, and numberless other inventions? They cannot bear even the moderate powers and privileges of the bishops and clergy of the church of England; and how then will they submit to the tyranny and dominion of the Romish hierarchy, the church's infallibility, the Pope's supremacy, penances, ecclesiastical commissions, and perhaps an office of Inquisition? They may then complain of Priestcraft indeed, and will feel (1 Kings XII. 10.) "the little finger" of popery to be heavier than "the loins" of the church of England.

But if we were more indifferent than I hope we are about religion, yet what is to become of our *property*? which is a consideration that may affect those, whom perhaps the other would not. All the lands belonging to churches and abbeys will in all probability be resumed; all public securities too will be cancelled, as being given by a government that will then be deemed

deemed a lawless usurpation: they likewise who have obtained any royal grants, or purchased any of the forfeited estates will be forced to restore them to the former proprietors: all which things will beget infinite disorder and confusion; and as they will be a great blow to some even of the noblest families, so they must entirely ruin thousands of others who have no other means of subsistence. All who have distinguished themselves in the service of their country and by their attachment to the present royal family will be sure to pay dearly for it, and will not be permitted to buy their peace but at an extravagant price. Nay the whole nation will lie at the mercy of the conqueror, and may be considered as a nation of rebels, and be drained and exhausted accordingly. And indeed otherwise how can he be able to recompense that starving and hungry crew, the followers of his fortunes? As their merits will be great if they succeed in placing him upon the throne of these kingdoms, so their rewards must be great in proportion; nor indeed is it a little thing that will satisfy the cravings of indigence and ambition, but like Pharaoh's lean kine they will eat up all the plump and well-favoured ones. Immense debts will likewise be owing to foreign courts for so many years subsistence, and for the wars which they will charge as entered into upon his account, and for the aids and assistances which they have afforded him in his present expedition, so that

we must not only endure the curse of being inflaved, but must also be obliged to pay them for inflaving us.

Our *trade and commerce* will also be in as precarious and wretched a condition as our property. For as our king will be the creature of France and Spain, and owe both his crown and the continuance of it to their aid and assistance, he must make ample concessions to them in return, and either out of gratitude or out of necessity sacrifice every thing to them that they shall require. And consequently those most valuable acquisitions, which we have made in this and former wars, will be tamely given up into their hands; the sovereignty of the seas will be lost; our commerce will be limited and restrained, theirs will be enlarged and indulged; and as fast as foreign commodities flow in, the little wealth remaining in the nation will be drawn out, till in time we shall become like (Ezek. XXVI. 17.) "Tyre, the renowned city which was strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, which caused their terror to be on all that haunt it," but at last was made (ver. 14.) "like the top of a rock, a place to spread nets upon," the habitation only of poor fishermen.

To the loss of our pure religion, the loss of our property, the loss of our trade, will yet be added, to complete our misery, the loss of our *excellent constitution* and *English liberty*. For the Pretender to his Majesty's crown can never

never succeed here but by conquest, or under the notion of divine hereditary indefeasible right. We suppose that he would choose the latter, but divine hereditary indefeasible right infers the most absolute uncontrollable dominion in the prince, and the most unconditional passive obedience in the people. For if he has an unalienable and indefeasible right to govern, his right will be still the same, whether he govern like a king or like a tyrant; and what reason have we to think that he will not govern like a tyrant, and the worst of tyrants? We might as well set a wolf to guard the fold, as an Italian papist to protect the liberties of English protestants. The princes, from whom he pretends to derive his claim, were no such friends to liberty, as to make us fond of seeing their race upon the throne again; they were bred up with high notions of their divine right, and during their reigns there was a continual struggle between the prerogatives of the crown and the privileges of the people; and can this man have learned juster notions of government in Italy? or is religion to be fetched from Rome, or liberty from France or Spain? It must be by war and violence, and with much effusion of blood, that he must ascend the throne, for God forbid that we should ever submit tamely to his government; and as he must attain to power by force, so by force he must support himself in it, and consequently strengthen himself with foreign aids, maintain
large

large standing armies, and establish a military government. This would infallibly be the case; and our chains would sit heavier, and we should be more deeply afflicted with our slavery, for the full and perfect enjoyment that we have had of liberty. For it is certain that England never enjoyed so many years together of ease and liberty as since the happy Revolution. I do not except even the glorious days of queen Elizabeth, of which perhaps it may be truly said, that it is better to read of them than to have lived in them. We have enjoyed our liberties to such a degree, that we have abused them even to licentiousness. And the worst enemy of the present government cannot charge his Majesty with attempting to infringe them in any single instance. The law hath been the constant and invariable rule of his Majesty's government, and if it had been as much the measure of his people's obedience, we should still have continued the happiest nation upon earth. No government indeed can ever be administered entirely to every body's satisfaction. Some persons are never to be satisfied; and there will always be defects and failings in the best of governments, as well as in the best of men: but as he is the best man who hath the fewest vices, so that is the happiest government, which is attended with the fewest evils and inconveniences. But what good have we to hope, or rather what evil have we not to fear in a change of government? A man must
be

be destitute of common understanding, who is capable of believing that a protestant church can flourish in the reign of a bigotted papist, or if you will of a professed infidel; or that civil liberty can be secure under the government of one trained up in the maxims and politics of the most arbitrary courts in Europe. All the benefits and advantages obtained by the Revolution will be forfeited and lost by another revolution. And then, when true religion and liberty are extinct in Britain, where shall we find them or seek them upon earth? and who would not therefore perish rather in their defense, than survive their fall? who would not rather die a protestant and a free man, than live an idolater and a slave?

II. These are the evils with which we are threatened, and we are to consider in the next place the most effectual method to prevent them. We have as high an opinion as any man can entertain, of his Majesty's heroic spirit and resolution, of the wisdom and integrity of his councils, and particularly of the great council before whom I stand, of the courage and conduct of his generals, and of the strength and bravery of his troops inspired with the activity and ardor of their young and darling royal leader: but yet human means alone will not be sufficient, we must likewise implore the divine blessing upon them, and pursue the method recommended by the Apostle, namely,
to

to “remember from whence we are fallen,
“and repent and do the first works.”

When any calamity befalls a nation, we should look farther than the immediate causes, and consider it as proceeding originally from the hand of God. (Amos III. 6.) “Shall
“there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath
“not done it?” It is the gracious intent and purpose of Almighty God, not willingly to grieve and afflict the children of men, but by his judgments to awaken them to a sense of their guilt and of their duty, and so bring them to repentance before the measure of their iniquities be full. And when national calamities produce national repentance, and a people turn away from the evil of their doings, the Lord will turn away from his fierce anger, and will abundantly pardon, and instead of destroying resettle them in peace and tranquillity. There are frequent declarations to this purpose in scripture, and we see them most remarkably exemplified in the case of the Ninevites. The prophet Jonah was sent unto them with this message from God, (Jonah III. 4, &c.) “Yet
“forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown,” and it had the proper effect upon them. “So
“the people of Nineveh believed God, and
“proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth;
“from the greatest of them even to the least of
“them: And God saw their works, that they
“turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said that he
“would

“ would do unto them, and he did it not.” Oh! let us then “ remember from whence we “ are fallen,” how much we are degenerated from our former piety and virtue, “ and re-
“ pent and do the first works,” and thereby retrieve the ancient honor and dignity of the nation. The wisdom of the government and legislature may certainly contribute most to a national reformation by enforcing old laws, by enacting new ones, and settling things upon a right and solid foundation; and they no doubt will act in a manner worthy of themselves and of their high station at this dangerous conjuncture: but still every body may contribute something, every body may reform some, may reform one at least, and not add to the sinfulness of his sins by bringing distress and ruin upon his country. This is not a time (Isa. XXX. 10.) to “ speak smooth thing;” it behoves us to deal freely with ourselves, and to consider seriously and impartially what are those national vices, which may have been the principal occasions of the present national calamities, and of which the reformation therefore ought to be more speedy, as it is more necessary.

One of the most melancholy symptoms in our case is the *great decay of public virtue and love of our country*. Self-love is now the prevailing passion, and every thing almost is turned to private emolument and advantage. Public spirit is become ridiculous; it hath been so often pretended, where it was not, that it would
scarcely

scarcely be credited, where it really was : and love of our country at best is only a popular topic of discourse ; it is like music upon the tongue, but seldom sinketh deep into the heart. If we had any true love and affection for our country, should we be so fond of every thing foreign, and encourage French manufactures and French commodities to the prejudice of our own, and thereby contribute to the furnishing of our worst enemies with the sinews of war against ourselves ? or would so many act in open defiance of all law and justice, and defraud the public revenue for the sake of their own private gain, carry on an illicit trade, and not only convey our treasure, but (what is even worse) intelligence to our enemies ? or would so many of our fellow-subjects have taken part in this unnatural rebellion, and have joined in league with our most cruel and inveterate enemies to transfer the seat of war into our own island ? It was not this spirit that inspired our ancestors in the fields of Cressy and Agincourt, and enabled our two glorious queens to humble the pride of Spain and France in two of their greatest kings. It was not this spirit that animated the old Romans, and raised their country to the height of glory and of empire. And to the commendation of our enemies the French be it spoken, that they are actuated by a different spirit ; they love and honor their king and country ; prefer every thing of their own,

and despise every thing foreign in comparison ; and as we are fond of imitating their manners and fashions, it would be well if we would imitate them in the most laudable part of their character. This would be gaining a complete victory indeed over our enemies, and would be a more fatal blow to them, and a greater check to their conquests than the most fortunate campaign. Love of our country is our duty, not only as Englishmen but as Christians. Our Saviour himself (Luke XIX. 41.) " wept " over his country at a distant view of the calamities which were to befall it. And St. Paul expresses such ardent affection for his countrymen, (Rom. IX. 3.) that he could even " wish that himself were accursed from Christ, for his brethren, his " kinsmen according to the flesh." O " pray " then " for the peace of " our " Jerusalem ; " (Psal. CXXII. 6, &c.) they shall prosper " that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, " and prosperity within thy palaces. For " my brethren and companions sakes I will " now say Peace be with thee ; " Yea for the sake of true religion, " because of the house " of the Lord our God, I will seek thy " good."

Another thing that requires immediate repentance and reformation is the *luxury* and *dissoluteness* of the age. The old English plainness and integrity are in a manner lost among us ; the prodigality and love of pleasure, which

which reigned in high life, have now descended into low life, and infected all ranks and degrees of men; and hence so much idleness and drunkenness in our streets, and such universal corruption of manners, and violation of all order and government. And what can be the necessary consequences of these things, but ruin and devastation? The Assyrian and Persian empires; the Carthaginian and Grecian commonwealths; and Rome herself, the nurse of heroes, and empress of the world; all fell by the luxury of their own subjects more than by the arms of foreign nations; they could not have been so easily conquered and led captive by their enemies, if they had not been first subdued and enslaved by their vices. And will not the same causes naturally produce the same effects? such vices are ruinous at all times, but are more particularly destructive in times of war, when especially the advice of Moses to the Israelites ought to be religiously observed by every nation, (Deut. XXIII. 9.) "When the host goeth forth against thine enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing."

It is high time too to repent of our *factions* and *divisions*, and unite all as one man against the common enemy. Our situation as an island is such, and our country withal so well-peopled, that if we were firmly united among ourselves, we should have little to fear from any power, or indeed all the powers in Eu-

rope: but of late we have been rent and torn into so many parties and factions, as no doubt have given great encouragement to our enemies, and made them imagin that we were more divided than in truth we are, or than the event hath proved. For England never testified greater loyalty and unanimity, and we hope that neither will her sister Scotland be wanting in gratitude, and obedience, and zeal to chastise her impious rebel sons. Our common danger ought to unite us, if nothing else can: and without doubt several who might otherwise be desperate enough to be in the interest of the Pretender, yet as Britons cannot be for the Pretender brought in by France, who can never intend to give us a king, but to reduce us to a province, and constitute a viceroy over us; and others who before were wavering in their inclinations, I make no question this rebellion hath fixed in loyalty, when they see by what horrid means and instruments a change must be accomplished, and that instead of being governed as they have been by (Esth. IV. 11.) "a golden scepter," they must be (Psal. II. 9. Rev. II. 27.) "ruled with a rod of iron, and broken in pieces like a potter's vessel." The members of the church of England and protestant dissenters now plainly perceive, that they have one common interest, as they have one common danger; and we trust will unite as brethren not only upon the present, but upon all future

ture occasions for the public good, and watch and guard against popery, which would equally destroy them both. All will unite and cooperate with us, but the worst of papists, and foreign papists, who are like so many vipers in our bosom, and give secret intelligence to our enemies, and upon any favorable opportunity would throw off the mask, and declare against us. Our country hath been called the country of factions and parties; but now faction be dead, and party revive no more; and (as the voice of authority once said) "let
" there be no other distinction heard of among
" us for the future, but of those who are for
" the protestant religion and the present esta-
" blishment, and of those who mean a popish
" prince and a French government."

Above all we should lament and bewail our many hainous *offenses towards God*, which have brought down these heavy judgments upon us, and will bring still heavier, except we repent. Seriousness and zeal in religion used formerly to be one of the distinguishing characters of the English nation, but now we are as remarkable for an affected levity and indifference. How has perjury of late years multiplied and increased among us! what dreadful oaths and curses are daily heard in our streets! what heresies and blasphemies have been vented from the press! what a spirit of infidelity hath prevailed and been propagated in the nation! what open ridicule of the most

solemn offices in the liturgy, and of the word of God itself! what profanation of the sabbath! what disregard of the sacraments! what utter neglect of private and family prayer, and indeed of all public worship and religion! Hath any nation, even of the corrupt and idolatrous church of Rome, used (Jer. II. 11.) "their Gods" so, "who yet are no gods?" We are, too many of us, like them in our manner of celebrating the latter part of the Lord's day, but we do not like them religiously observe the former part; that is we have all their vices, but none of their devotion. And was there ever an instance of a nation despising God and religion, who were not despised in their turn, and trampled under foot of their enemies? And would it not be a just judgment of God, since we have made ourselves so very unworthy of the protestant religion, to deprive us of it, (2 Thess. II. 11, 12.) "that we should believe a lie, "who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness?" Oh! let us then humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, repent truly of our sins, and return unto the Lord in righteousness, and he will return unto us in mercy, and save us from all our enemies. When the power of Spain was in its meridian glory, and our enemies ready to devour us were hovering about our coasts with a fleet that was called *invincible*, how did we then cry unto the Lord, and make
our

our humble supplications unto our God, and he heard our prayer, and blew with his wind, and dispersed or destroyed them all? And when we were again in danger of sinking under the weight of popery and arbitrary power, what zeal did we then testify for our holy religion! how were our churches crowded! how were prayers and sermons attended! how religiously did we observe our solemn fasts! how frequently and devoutly did we receive the blessed sacrament! and the Lord raised up for us a glorious deliverer, and after him a succession of protestant princes, who have been the felicity of our times, and may their posterity be so to the latest generations! And (Psal. LXXVII. 9.) "hath God" now "forgotten to be gracious?" or rather have not we forgotten to make our prayers unto him? We have certainly more to fear from our own impiety and irreligion, than from the arms of all our enemies. Let us make our peace with God, and he will be our shield and our salvation. Very applicable to the present occasion are the words of the prophet Joel, and with them I will conclude. (Joel II. 15, &c.) "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly; Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them. Then will the Lord be jealous for his land and pity his people;

Y 4

“ people; Yea, the Lord will answer and say
“ unto his people, Behold, I will no more
“ make you a reproach among the heathen;
“ but I will remove far off from you the
“ northern army, and will drive him into a
“ land barren and desolate; and ye shall eat
“ in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the
“ name of the Lord your God, who hath dealt
“ wondrously with you.”

S E R M O N IV.

On our SAVIOUR's CHOICE of his APOSTLES:

Preached in LAMBETH Chapel, at the CON-
SECRATION of the Right Reverend WIL-
LIAM WARBURTON, D. D. Lord
Bishop of GLOUCESTER, on Sunday,
January 20, 1760. Published by Order of
his Grace the Lord Archbishop of CAN-
TERBURY.

M A R K III. 14.

He ordained twelve, that they should be with
him, and that he might send them forth to
preach.

OUR blessed Saviour had not entered long
upon his public ministry, before he se-
lected twelve of his disciples, more particu-
larly to attend his person and hear his doctrine,
to be witnesses of the actions of his life, and
to propagate the gospel after his death. These
twelve he named *Apostles*, a name not unusual
at that time, and signifying no more than a
messenger, or one sent upon a special errand,
but applied by way of eminence and distinc-
tion to them, who were the first messengers of
Christ, and were sent to publish the glad tid-
ings

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ings of peace and salvation. (1 Tim. V. 22.)
“ Lay hands suddenly on no man” is an apostolic injunction; and without doubt Christ himself would be cautious in the choice of his apostles; in building his church he would take care at least to lay a good foundation. Accordingly we may observe, that he offered up his earnest prayers to God, before he ordained his apostles. “ He went out into a mountain “ to pray,” as St. Luke expresseth it, (VI. 12, 13.) “ and continued all night in prayer “ to God; And when it was day, he called “ unto him his disciples, and of them he “ chose twelve, whom also he named apostles:” leaving herein an example to the bishops and governors of the church, before they admit any person to (1) “ the work and ministry of a bishop,” to pray unto God to “ replenish him so with truth of doctrine, and “ adorn him with innocency of life, that he “ may duly execute the office whereunto he is “ called.” Now the persons, whom our blessed Saviour chose for his apostles, were twelve, honest, poor, illiterate men, of no power, influence, or authority, of no learning, eloquence, or address, called up from low trades to be ministers of the gospel, from humble fishers to be (Matt. IV. 19.) “ fishers “ of men.” And what could be the reasons for our Saviour’s making in all appearance so strange

(1) Form of Consecration.

(2) *diadema*

strange a choice? The best might have been expected from him, who "knew all men," as St. John (H. 25.) speaketh, "and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man."

1. The apostles were *twelve* in number. Our Saviour was willing to have a sufficient number of witnesses to the principal actions and passages of his life, that such important facts might not rest upon the credit of one or two only. A collusion might sooner be suspected among a few than among so many. But why he pitched upon the number *twelve* particularly, the fathers have offered several conjectures, and suppose some allusion to the twelve stones upon Aaron's breast-plate, or the twelve stones which Joshua took out of Jordan, or the twelve spies sent into Canaan; and there is scarce any number *twelve* mentioned in the Old Testament, which some or other of the fathers have not applied to this purpose. But the most probable opinion is, that as in the general the children of Israel were a type of the spiritual Israel the church of Christ, and Christ was desirous to conform the polity of his church as near as the difference of institutions would admit to the polity of the Jews; so in particular he chose twelve apostles answering to the twelve tribes or twelve heads of the tribes of Israel. And this opinion is authorized by those words of our Saviour to his apostles; (Matt. XIX. 28.) "Ye shall sit
" upon

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“ upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel;” that is, ye shall have a power and dignity in my church resembling and answering to that of the twelve heads of the tribes over the twelve tribes of Israel. St. Barnabas, the companion of St. Paul, of whom so much is related in the Acts of the Apostles, (2) says expressly in his Catholic Epistle, that “ the apostles were *twelve* for a witness of the tribes, because the tribes of Israel were ‘ twelve.’” Indeed when the harvest was increased, and more laborers were wanting in the harvest, (Luke X. 1.) “ the Lord appointed “ other seventy also.” As he chose twelve apostles answering to the twelve heads of the tribes, so he appointed other seventy according to the number of the Sanhedrim. But these seventy were by no means of equal authority with the twelve apostles; as appears among many instances from this particularly, that upon the fall of Judas, Matthias was chosen out of the seventy to be one of the twelve apostles. The apostles upon a vacancy in their order were careful to fill up the number, not that I conceive there was any great mystery, or more than ordinary virtue in the number *twelve*, nor was our Saviour himself at all exact and scrupulous in adhering to it,

(2) διὰ δώδεκα, ὡς μαρτυροῦνται τῶν φυλῶν, ὅτι διὰ δώδεκα αἱ φυλαὶ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ. duodecim, in tribuum testimonium, quia apud Isaac.

litas duodecim erant tribus. S. Barnab. Epist. Cap. 8. p. 25. Edit. Cotelerii et Clerici.

for we know that he afterwards called St. Paul to be a *thirteenth* apostle.

2. The apostles were *honest* and *good* men, except Judas, whose case deserves particular consideration. Him, I say, excepted, all the rest were honest and good men, as is evident from all that they said and did and suffered, from their doctrine and lives and deaths; so that the bitterest enemies of christianity were never able to fix a brand upon their character. (1 Cor. IV. 1, 2.) "It is required in stewards" "that a man be found faithful;" and more especially should "the ministers of Christ," "and stewards of the mysteries of God" be faithful. I know nothing that could possibly have done so much disservice to the christian cause, as the wicked morals of its first advocates, the apostles. If there was none other exception to the Mohammedan religion, yet the scandalous life of its founder Mohammed is a sufficient prejudice against it. A monster of lust, rapin, and cruelty, to set up for a teacher immediately from God, and a reformer of religion and manners, is the grossest of contradictions. A good life is the best and most convincing sermon. The most excellent preaching without a suitable behaviour is no better than (1 Cor. XIII. 1.) "sounding brass" "or a tinkling cymbal."

3. The apostles were *poor* men, of *no power*, *influence*, or *authority*; and such a choice seemeth to be quite contrary to all the rules of human

human policy and prudence. Certainly the most likely way to form a party, and make it succeed and prosper in the world, is to engage the men of interest and authority on our side, that so the rest of mankind may either be won or awed into a compliance. This is the way that cunning impostors have usually taken, and scarce hath any imposture been established in the world but by authority. It was authority that established the Pagan religion, and introduced a plurality of Gods in opposition to the worship of the one true God of the universe. It was authority that bound upon the shoulders of the Jews those heavy burdens of Pharisaical rites and ceremonies, and made the commandments of God of none effect by the vain traditions of men. It was authority that supported the pretensions of Mohammed; he prevailed not by the power of the spirit, but by the power of the sword, and the success of his arms was the success of his religion. It was authority that crammed as it were down mens throats those hard things which they would never otherwise have digested or taken; transubstantiation, purgatory, prayers in an unknown tongue, prayers to angels, prayers to the dead, the worship of images, and the like. It was authority that obtruded them upon the church at first, authority that hath supported and guarded them ever since by secular arms as well as by spiritual, by interdicts and excommunications, by dragoons and inquisitions.

But

But the apostles of Jesus Christ were not sent as wolves into the midst of sheep, but (Matt. X. 16.) "as sheep into the midst of wolves." They were none of them members of the great Sanhedrim, none of them descendants of illustrious families and rulers of the Jews; but were most of them poor fishermen, all of them men of obscure parentage and of the lowest rank among the people. They were so far from being countenanced by any of the powers of this world, that they had all the men of power and authority violent against them, by none assisted, persecuted by almost all. This defect might in some measure have been supplied, if the apostles had been men of art and address; but

4. As they were poor, so were they likewise illiterate; as they were men of no power, influence, or authority, so they were likewise men of no learning, eloquence, or address; called up from low trades to be ministers of the gospel, from humble fishers to be "fishers of men." And what unlikely persons were these to convert the world to a new religion, without authority to compel, and without art to persuade! The Magi in the east, and the Druids here in the west, and in general all the heathen priests, would never have gained such an ascendent over the people, if they had not been the most learned men of their times. The Pharisees were the most learned sect among the Jews as well as the most powerful; they

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they sat in Moses's chair both as judges and as doctors; and therefore their persons were so greatly revered, and their traditions were so implicitly received in the Jewish church. When the church of Rome was in the meridian of its glory, the little learning that was then in the world was almost all in the hands of the clergy. The laity was ignorant and purposely kept in ignorance, the ecclesiastics were the only scholars: and indeed they were a set of men truly wise in their generation; what at any time they wanted in power, they amply supplied with artifice and address; and perhaps all history cannot furnish us with a parallel instance of dull credulity on one side, and of complete priestcraft on the other. But the apostles of Jesus Christ instead of being learned themselves in an ignorant age, were in a learned age themselves illiterate. Learning might have made some amends for their want of authority, or authority might have made some amends for their want of learning; but poor and illiterate too they were so far from being assisted by either, that they were vehemently opposed by both. And what could be the reasons which determined our Saviour to make such a choice?

One reason perhaps was, because the rich and learned of the world were not at first disposed to receive and embrace the gospel. We have the emblem of the rich in the story of the rich young man related by the evangelists,
(Matt.

(Matt. XIX. Mark X. Luke XVIII.) upon which our Saviour maketh this reflection, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" Though they might not be guilty of any notorious sin, yet they could not submit to "forsake all," and "follow Christ." It is also well known, that the preaching of the gospel was at first to the Greeks and to the learned of the world (1 Cor. I. 23.) "foolishness." Neither philosophers, nor rabbi's of great note made public profession of the faith till several years after Christ. Nicodemus indeed (John III. 1, &c.) "a ruler of the Jews" came to Jesus, but he came privately and "by night:" and St. John (XII. 42.) expressly informs us, that "among the chief rulers many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue."

Another reason of our Saviour's making choice of such men for his apostles might be for fear that others, the rich and the learned, should enervate the force, and corrupt the purity of the gospel; the former by the softness of prosperity and luxury, the latter by the mixture of the doctrines of their particular schools with the doctrine of Christ, as they both actually did not long after their admission into the church: but a corruption at first would have been of more fatal consequence than one afterwards. It is certain that plain

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simple men were the fittest to publish the gospel in its original plainness and simplicity; and being poor and persecuted, they were the properest apostles of a crucified Saviour, the properest promulgers of the doctrine of the cross, confirming it by their example as well as by their profession, by what they did and suffered as well as by what they taught and writ. Many can preach up patience in another's case, but few can practise it in their own.

But doubtless the principal reason of our Saviour's choosing such persons for his apostles, was the more fully to manifest the truth and divinity of the christian religion. For how improbable was it, that such plain simple men should conspire in a fraud of this kind; or if they had conspired in it, how impossible was it for them to succeed? It is no unusual thing for the powerful and learned to impose on the weak and illiterate, but that the weak and illiterate should impose on the powerful and learned seemeth utterly impracticable. Nothing but truth, nothing but divine truth, and supported by a divine power, could have so prevailed in the world under such disadvantages, not only without learning but against learning, not only without authority but against authority. "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" as (1 Cor. I. 20.)

20.) St. Paul putteth the question. Where is the malice of the Jewish Sanhedrim? where is the sophistry of the Greek philosophers? where is the power of the Roman legions? all baffled, silenced, and subdued by a few poor illiterate men! It was prophesied of the kingdom of Christ (that stone which was to break in pieces all other kingdoms, and become itself a great mountain, and fill the whole earth) that it should (Dan. II. 45.) be "cut out of the mountain without hands," should be formed without art or polishing, without proportionable human means or instruments: and in reality never were such unpromising persons employed, never were such unlikely ways taken, to bring about so great, so sudden a revolution: and the thing could not possibly have been effectuated, if the same divine spirit who foretold it at first, had not afterwards accomplished it. If there was none other argument for the divine origin of the christian religion, yet this is argument sufficient, and is enough to make all considering men cry out (Psal. CXVIII. 23.) "This is the Lord's doing, it is marvelous in our eyes!" This too is an advantage peculiar to the Christian religion above all the religions of the world. Even the Jewish religion had for its founder Moses, who (Acts VII. 22.) "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds;" and among the prophets and inspired writers, some as

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Isaiah and Daniel were courtiers, some as David and Solomon were kings. But in the christian religion the case was very different. Christ himself had (John VII. 15.) "never learned letters." His birth was first made known to a few poor shepherds, and his gospel was first preached by a few poor fishermen. (1 Cor. I. 26.) "Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble were called; But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:" and then follows the reason of all, "That no flesh should glory in his presence," that as the whole work was manifestly his, so his might be all the glory. And certainly the meaner the instruments employed in so wonderful a work, the more consummate the skill of the workman: the less is owing to the efficacy of second causes, the more must be ascribed to the influence of the first cause: the less the apostles natural abilities, the greater (1 Cor. II. 4.) "the demonstration of the spirit and of power:" the less their learning and lower their education, the more miraculous their having (Luke XXI. 15.) "a mouth and wisdom, which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist:" in a word, the less (2 Cor. III. 5.) "sufficient they were of themselves"

“ selves” to do these things “ as of them-
“ selves,” the more evidently it appeared that
their “ sufficiency was of God.” (Luke X.
21.) “ I thank thee, O Father, Lord of hea-
“ ven and earth ; that thou hast hid these
“ things from the wise and prudent, and hast
“ revealed them unto babes ; even so, Father,
“ for so it seemed good in thy sight”—was our
Saviour’s thanksgiving upon this occasion ; and
we ought in like manner to bless almighty
God for giving so wonderful a confirmation to
our faith, and learn not to think too highly of
human power and human policy, but at all
times be ready humbly to acknowlege, that
(1 Cor. I. 25.) “ the foolishness of God is
“ wiser than men, and the weakness of God
“ is stronger than men.”

It was thus that the christian church was at
first established by miracle, but it is to be pre-
served among us by natural means, and the
ordinary course of providence. A *learned*
education is now necessary for the ministers of
the gospel, to enable them to confirm believers,
and to convince gainsayers. Even at the first
it pleased almighty God to call St. Paul in an
extraordinary manner ; as he was to be the
apostle of the Gentiles, so he was master of all
the learning of the Gentiles ; and in that po-
lite and knowing age we shall find none that
exceeded him, if there were any that equalled
him, among the finest writers and orators of
Greece and Rome. St. Luke was bred to let-

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ters, being bred a physician; and his stile is therefore observed to be more correct and elegant than that of the other evangelists. Though the apostles were ordered by our Saviour himself to (Matt. X. 19. Mark XIII. 11. Luke XII. 11, 12.) "take no thought beforehand what they should speak, for it should be given them in that same hour what they should speak;" yet they themselves give different directions to others; and (1 Tim. IV. 13, 15.) St. Paul exhorts the bishop of the Ephesians "to give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine; Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all." And when divines eminent for literature, industrious in their profession, conspicuous as preachers, illustrious as authors, are advanced to the first stations in the church, it is not only a security to religion, but an encouragement to learning, and a strong incitement to others to prosecute the same studies, and excel in the same useful arts.

Though the apostles for wise reasons, as we have seen, were chosen from among men of low birth and parentage; yet times and circumstances are so changed, that persons of noble extraction by coming into the church may add strength and ornament to it; especially as long as we can boast of some, who are honorable in themselves, as well as in their families; and whose personal merits and virtues,

tues, if they had not been nobly descended, would yet have intitled them justly to the rank and præminence that they enjoy. God forbid, that the church of England should ever be reduced to the state and condition of the Gallican church, incumbered with the weight of prelates of quality without learning or virtue.

Virtue indeed at all times, in these last ages as well as the first, is essential to the character of a christian, and much more of a christian bishop. The miraculous powers of the apostles, heavenly visions and divine revelations, none can pretend to but impostors or enthusiasts: but their *moral and christian virtues* all are obliged to copy; and (Mark IX. 35.) "if
" any man desire to be first, the same shall be
" last of all, and servant of all;" the higher his station, the greater his obligations to minister to the church of Christ. In scripture language the highest titles bestowed upon the governors of the church still imply their greater use and service. They are called even "stars" and "angels," but angels are (Heb. I. 14.) "all ministering spirits," and what are stars, unless they (Philip. II. 15.) "shine
" as lights in the world?" Dignities conferred on the undeserving cease to be *dignities*. The worthy alone can, like good Onias, (Ecclus L. 2.) "make the garment of holiness
" honorable." What the duties and qualifications of a good bishop are, St. Paul hath described in his Epistles to Timothy and Titus,

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the one bishop of Ephesus, the other of Crete: and without entering into a detail of the particulars, we may see them exemplified in some *living instances*, such excellent provision hath divine providence made for the preservation of religion, and so fully and effectually hath his Majesty proved himself to be the (Isa. XLIX. 23.) “nursing father” of the church, and *defender of the faith*.

At the same time that we return our thanks, let us humbly beg of God a continuance of these blessings: That for the honor and advancement of religion, they who are most capable of defending it by their doctrine and adorning it by their lives, the most learned and knowing, the most wise and prudent, the best men and the best-tempered, may ever be called up to the government of the church: That they may not only excel in all good literature themselves, and instruct and enlighten the church by their own pious and learned labors, but also constantly patronize and promote others who do the same: That the influence of their good example may descend from the highest to the lowest of the clergy, “like (Psal. CXXXIII. 2.) the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down unto the beard, even Aaron’s beard, and went down to the skirts of his cloathing:” That we of the inferior clergy may (Heb. XIII. 17. 1 Thess. V. 12, 13.) “obey them who have the rule over us, and admonish us, and
“esteem

“esteem them very highly in love for their
“works sake:” That (1 Tim. V. 17.) “they
“who rule well may be counted worthy of
“double honor, especially they who labor in
“the word and doctrine:” Finally that all the
clergy may faithfully discharge their duties in
their several stations, to the honor of God,
and to the edifying of his church, that so (Col.
III. 4.) “when Christ who is our life shall
“appear, we may also appear with him in
“glory.” Amen.

S E R M O N V.

G O D and the K I N G:

Preached before the KING, on the Day of
his ACCESSION, 1761.

I P E T. II. 17.

Fear God, Honor the King.

IT hath been observed, and a very just ob-
servation it is, that there is a concatenation
of the virtues as well as of the vices; that
they are linked as it were together, and one
draweth on and inferreth another. Our Saviour
himself hath in effect asserted the same thing,
“ in

in saying (Matt. XXII. 40.) that "on the
 "two great commandments," the love of God
 and the love of our neighbour, "hang all the
 "law and the prophets." But some virtues
 have a nearer relation and connexion than
 others, are more closely and intimately united,
 and one floweth naturally and almost necessarily
 from another. Of this kind are the two pre-
 cepts which St. Peter hath joined together,
 "Fear God, Honor the King."

Religion and government are the two main
 pillars which support the world. Without
 them there would be nothing but anarchy, and
 confusion, and every evil work. Take down
 the one and you weaken the other; they must
 both stand or fall together. For which reason
 St. Peter hath fitly joined together the two
 precepts of "fearing God and honoring the
 "King." They are great and important du-
 ties, when considered separately; they are of
 greater force and efficacy, when taken con-
 jointly; and the former is the proper founda-
 tion and support of the latter. For it will
 ever be found true, that they who have the
 justest sense of their duty to God, are most
 loyal and obedient to the King. The best men
 and christians always make the best citizens
 and subjects.

When St. Peter united the two precepts of
 "fearing God and honoring the King," as he
 could mean to represent only the true God,
 not any idols or false gods, as the proper ob-
 ject

ject of our *fear*; so he designed to recommend only a just and lawful prince, not a lawless tyrant, as a character deserving of our *honor*. "An idol," as St. Paul saith, (1 Cor. VII. 4.) "is nothing in the world," and instead of being made an object of worship, ought rather to be treated with contempt. A tyrant is worse than nothing, and so far from deserving honor, that he is more justly intitled to hatred and abhorrence. As it is only the true God that we are to *fear* and *worship*; so it is only a just and lawful prince that we are to *honor* and *obey*: and these, if considered separately, are great and important duties in themselves.

The "fear of God" is not a superstitious horror, but a religious veneration of his divine majesty, to live always as in his presence, to reverence his holy name and his word, to stand in awe and sin not, to regard nothing so much as his favor, to dread nothing so much as his displeasure: and who can reflect upon the greatness of God and the littleness of man, and not tremble before him? Every attribute almost of the deity may properly excite and work upon our fear. We are naturally under some awe and apprehension, when we come before our earthly superiors; but we are at all times in the more immediate presence of the great God of heaven and earth. No man can consider and compare together his omnipotence with our imbecillity and

6

weakness,

weakness, his omniscience with our frailty and ignorance, his purity and perfection with our sins and wickedness; and not be ready to profess with holy Job (XXIII. 15.) "Therefore am I troubled at his presence; when I consider, I am afraid of him." The very goodness of God will make all ingenuous natures fearful of offending him, according to that of the psalmist, (Psal. CXXX. 4.) "There is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared." Not one adequate object of our fear can be found, if not the righteous governor of the world, our inspector here, and our judge hereafter. (Luke XII. 4, 5.) "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do: But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear," saith our Saviour; "fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast in to hell; yea I say unto you, Fear him."

As "the fear of God" includeth several duties, so likewise doth "the honor of the king," and extendeth to all civil magistrates, not only "unto the king as supreme," (1 Pet. II. 13, 14.) but likewise "unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well." Society cannot subsist without regularity and order, without some to govern and some to obey. A fit disposition and subordination of the parts is as necessary in the body politic as in the natural body; and the hand

hand and the foot can ill perform their functions, without the head to direct and the eye to oversee. Not only the peace and harmony of society will be spoiled for want of subordination, but discord and confusion and misery will ensue. For his own private interest therefore, as well as for the public emolument, a man should pay all due honor to the higher powers; and commonly they who are the first to violate order, are the first to suffer for it. Every society hath armed the magistrate with force sufficient to chastise such insolent offenders, and not only they, but often their friends and families are involved in the fatal consequences of their disobedience. Honor is due to all inferior magistrates, and much more to the superior, for the benefits which redound from good government. Gratitude as well as duty requires it at our hands; and he must be not only a bad citizen, but a bad man, who can refuse it.

So great, important, and necessary are these duties, when considered separately; but they are of much greater force and efficacy, when taken conjointly, and reciprocally confirm and strengthen each other. Religion and loyalty go best hand in hand together. The fear of God enforceth obedience to the laws, and obedience to the laws promoteth the fear of God. True religion is the best support of good government, and good government maintains and encourages true religion. So that it is no vi-
sionary

sionary scheme, but there is a real foundation in the nature of things for the alliance and union between Church and State; and what God and the constitution of things have thus joined together, let not men impiously pretend to put asunder.

If we would attain any just conception of the ways and means whereby civil policy contributes to the promotion of true religion, we cannot form our notions upon any constitution better than our own, especially as we see it happily administered at present. The king, or to speak more generally, the civil magistrate protects and defends the church from injury and violence, of professed enemies without, and of false brethren within. He not only protects and defends the church from danger, but also provides for her support and maintenance by a public endowment for her ministers; so that according to the prediction of the evangelical prophet, (Isa. XLIX. 23.) "kings are" properly "her nursing-fathers, and queens her "nursing-mothers." He allows to the heads and governors of the church a seat in the court of legislature and supreme judicature of the kingdom, to sit there as watchmen and guardians, to see that nothing be enacted or adjudged contrary to the interests of the church and religion. He permits the exercise of ecclesiastical jurisdiction with coercive powers for the reformation of manners, to supply the deficiencies of civil judicatures, and ratifies and enforces

forces spiritual censures by temporal penalties. He farther promotes the fear of God and a sense of religion by punishing impiety and profaneness, vice and immorality, more especially such as is opposite to or destructive of good government; (Rom. XIII. 4.) "for he beareth not the sword in vain, and is a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." He not only discountenances and punishes the bad, but also rewards and encourages the good, and manifests himself to be "sent" (1 Pet. II. 14.) as for the punishment of "evil doers," so likewise "for the praise of them that do well." But a good magistrate, a good king no way promotes religion and virtue more effectually than by his own example. They who resist all other motives, will yet have some regard to royal example. It is of greater force than the dead letter of statutes. It is a living law to the whole nation. Happy are the people, who can look up to the throne for a pattern of goodness, and experimentally find and feel the first in rank to be the first also in virtue.

Such influence hath the state upon religion, but religion operates more strongly upon the state, and "the fear of God" is the best foundation and support of "the honor of the king." Religion would be required of us, even if we lived without government or society; but no government or society can tolerably subsist without religion. A nation of atheists would be worse than a nation of Hottentots. "The
" fear

"fear of God" is the basis, as of all the social duties, so particularly of obedience to the civil powers. The one comprehends and includes the other, as the greater the less. From the one the other follows by natural consequence; and nothing can be of higher obligation than the will of God. If the authority of God cannot constrain and oblige us, it must be expected that the authority of man will have but little lasting effect upon us. Loose principles of religion must necessarily introduce loose principles of government, and disturb the peace and order and happiness of society. If men are under no fear or restraint of God, there can be no dependence upon the most solemn oaths and engagements, which are the greatest securities of government. Shake off this principle, and you unhinge the world; there is no bond to hold society together.

Religion is necessary for the support of government, as nothing else can supply the defects of human laws and constitutions. For human laws respect only overt acts, and bind the outward man; but the fear of God controls the mind and conscience, directs the intentions as well as regulates the actions. A man may be guilty of many breaches of the law in private, and yet escape public justice; but he will do nothing amiss in private any more than in public, who setteth God always before him, and acteth always as in his presence. A man may be very wicked and profligate, offend

send against the spirit of the law, and yet keep within the letter of it; but religion influenceth the whole man, and will make us (Rom. XIII. 5.) "subject not only for wrath but also for conscience sake." Human laws cannot restrain and prohibit some irregularities without the danger of introducing others as pernicious and destructive; but (Psal. XIX. 7.) "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul," and equally an enemy to every evil work. Human laws principally injoin such duties as more immediately affect the being and safety of society, but others there are no less conducive to the public welfare and happiness, such as humanity, hospitality, charity, gratitude, love of our country, and the like, which human laws cannot reach. Here therefore religion is wanted to lend an helping hand, to complete the obligation, and enforce it by divine authority. Human laws are framed rather to punish and discountenance the bad, than to reward and encourage the good; so that in this sense we may say truly with the apostle (1 Tim. V. 9.) that "the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners." Princes and governors cannot always distinguish the proper objects of their favor. This privilege belongs to him alone, who trieth the hearts and the reins. But if they were able to distinguish them, yet human means can never find a fund sufficient to reward them. The

sanction of rewards therefore must be derived from religion. God, and God alone, can (Matt. XVI. 27.) "reward every man according to his works."

Religion not only supplies the defects of human laws, but farther improves and advances our civil duties to the highest perfection. The church wisely consults and promotes the honor of the king by acknowledging her own dependency and his supremacy in all causes as well ecclesiastical as civil. This power was for many ages usurped by a foreign bishop, but by being restored to its rightful and lawful proprietor, all the absurdities are avoided, all the inconveniences are prevented of an empire within an empire. We are now taught (1 Pet. II. 13.) to "submit ourselves to the king as "supreme for the Lord's sake:" and none other principle of duty can be so steady and permanent as this, or so to be depended upon at all times and upon all occasions. Convenience, interest, the fear of punishment, the hope of preferment may avail much in engaging some men's obedience; but if these circumstances should happen to change, their dispositions and affections may change too, unless actuated by the superior motives of religion and the fear of God. Religion and the fear of God should be the rule and measure of our obedience to the civil powers. We should obey in every thing that is right, and in nothing that is wrong. A good prince *would not*, and a bad

bad one *ought not* to be further obeyed. Religion and the fear of God will not only influence our external obedience, but also command the heart and affections; so that we shall pay our duty for duty's sake, and without any subterfuge or evasion (Rom. XIII. 7.) "render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor." Religion and the fear of God will not only produce the most ready and cheerful submission, the most faithful and hearty service, but will likewise engage our devotions; and besides paying the tribute of our obedience, we shall offer up (1 Tim. II. 1, &c.) our most earnest "supplications and prayers for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. This," saith the apostle, "is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour:" and if our Saviour hath promised to hear the petitions of "two or three" assembled together in his name, how prevalent must be the united prayers of a whole church and kingdom! Besides "supplications, prayers," and "intercessions," the apostle mentions also "giving of thanks;" and surely we never can have greater reason to be thankful, than for the blessings of good government, for the happiness that we enjoy and have long enjoyed, and for the hope and prospect that we have of its being continued to the

latest generations. If we are not in all respects the happiest people upon earth, it must be only our own perverseness and dissensions that will disturb our happiness.

Since then the Church and State have so much influence upon each other, let those who govern, cherish and promote religion, as they would render their government easy and happy. Let those also who would be thought religious, approve their religion by their loyalty; and those who would be thought faithful subjects, approve their loyalty by their religion. The case of God and a good King is the direct reverse to that of God and Mammon. The duties are inseparable. We cannot duly serve the one without serving the other. We cannot "fear God," we cannot be good christians, and not "honor the King." We cannot "honor the King," we cannot be good subjects, and not "fear God." Wherefore (James II. 12.) "so speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's. Happy are the people that are in such a case, yea blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God!"

S E R M O N VI.

The GOOD SAMARITAN:

Preached at BRISTOL, for the Benefit of the IN-

FIRMARY.

LUKE X. 37.

Go, and do thou likewise.

AT the first hearing of these words you will recollect them to be the conclusion and application of the parable or story of the traveler "that fell among thieves, who stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead:" a parable so well known, that I presume there is not any occasion to refresh your memory with a detail of the circumstances of it. It is related in such a natural and lively manner, that many have been inclined to think it a real story rather than a parable: but whether it be the one or the other, it is so very striking and affecting, that it cannot fail of leaving the strongest impression upon every breast that hath the least tincture of humanity. Instead therefore of entering into the particulars of the story, it will be sufficient to consider the ex-

ample of the good Samaritan, which our Saviour here proposeth for our imitation, and to show how proper and applicable it is to the design of this present assembly, the support and encouragement of a hospital for the relief of the sick and the diseased, the maimed and the wounded, that we may not like the Priest and Levite "pass by on the other side," but like the good Samaritan "have compassion on them," and as our Saviour exhorts us, "go and do likewise."

I. The first particular, that will naturally engage our attention, is the person here proposed for a pattern of goodness, a Samaritan, a stranger and alien from the commonwealth of Israel: by which trait our Saviour plainly designed, not only to lessen the prejudices of his countrymen against the people of Samaria, but withal to signify what is of much greater use and importance, that there may be good men of all religions and countries, that acts of mercy and kindness are the principal acts of religion, that a man's practice is to be regarded more than his profession, and let his profession be what it will, his humanity and charity will be still a powerful recommendation of him, and an example worthy of imitation.

It must be confessed that the Samaritans were no better than a mongrel race, descended from idolatrous Heathens and apostate Jews. They were really heretics and schismatics from the true church of God; and instead of making,

ing, as they ought to have made, Jerusalem their place of worship, they set up temple against temple and altar against altar on mount Gerizim. By these means so great enmity was kindled between the two nations, and their religious differences were inflamed to such an highth, that they had no civil intercourse or correspondence the one with the other; for as St. John observes, (John IV. 9.) "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Our Saviour, who was himself universal love and benevolence, took every proper occasion of reproofing these narrow prejudices in others, and of opening and enlarging their minds to more noble and generous sentiments. Several instances might be given particularly with regard to the Samaritans; and here in the story before us we see him recommending a compassionate Samaritan to our imitation in preference to two venerable characters of his own nation, a Priest and a Levite.

Humanity and compassion are the distinguishing characteristics of men as men. Religion may improve them. Religion can never extinguish them. It is only a false religion that can ever suppress or extinguish them. The true religion will always cherish and improve them: and "by this," saith our Saviour, (John XIII. 35.) "shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." This is the test and criterion of

true religion. (James I. 27.) "Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Without this all other marks of religion are vain and to no purpose. (1 Cor. XIII. 2, 3.) "Though we have all faith so that we could remove mountains, though we give our bodies to be burned, and die martyrs for our religion, yet if we have not charity, it profiteth us nothing." It is not so much what we have believed as what we have practised, that will avail to our eternal salvation.

As good works are the grace and ornament of the best religion, so they are some palliation and excuse even for the worst. If we measure by our Saviour's rule, we shall think a charitable Samaritan, a heretic, a schismatic more deserving than a proud Priest and Levite, than two uncharitable orthodox believers, more valuable in himself, more imitable to men, more acceptable to God. For (Acts X. 34, 35.) "God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

About modes of faith, there will always be disputes and differences, but in acts of mercy and kindness all mankind may agree, and should agree. A hospital for the sick and maimed is of no sect or party; but Jews and Samaritans, believers and infidels, papists and pro-

protestants, churchmen and dissenters, how much soever they may differ in other matters, yet here may all unite and act in friendly comfort together. Whatever be our professions and denominations, yet here we may show ourselves *men*, and I had almost said *christians*. We cannot perhaps pretend to vindicate the faith and religion of all who subscribe and contribute to these useful institutions, but we may however commend their benevolent beneficent temper. If their morals are less pure and perfect in other respects, yet thus far at least they merit commendation; and that they may not rise up in judgment against us, we should avoid their faults, but approve their virtues, and "go and do likewise."

II. Next after the principal actor in this scene, the person who had compassion, we shall naturally turn our thoughts to the poor sufferer whom he had compassion upon, and as the one was a Samaritan, this other appears to have been a Jew. (ver. 30.) "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves." The honest Samaritan would have deserved highly to be commended for his humane and generous behaviour, whoever had been the object of his compassion; and I think little doubt can be made that he would have shown the same compassion to any man in the same circumstances of distress. But he certainly merits still higher commendation for overcoming the pre-
preju-

prejudices of education, breaking through the restraints of his religion and country, for sacrificing the resentments of a Samaritan to the feelings of a man, and treating an adversary with humanity and kindness more like a friend and neighbour.

Great as his generosity was in itself, it appears to yet greater advantage by being contrasted with the cool and indifferent behaviour (to say no worse) of the Priest and the Levite. He performs more good offices, and manifests greater regard for a stranger of a different persuasion, than they do for one of their own country and of the same religion with themselves. Whoever hath the heart and bowels of a man, must be sensibly affected, and as much pleased with the generosity of the one, as offended with the indifference of the others. A man "stripped, and wounded, and half dead," one would think, was a sight that would move any man's pity; and he hardly deserves the name of *man*, who can "come, and look on, and pass on by the other side."

Such a lamentable object, lying in the street or in the high-way, you would make no scruple of admitting into your hospital without any other recommendation than his own wretchedness and misery; and the greater the misery, the stronger the recommendation. Human nature in distress is surely of itself an object worthy of pity, without taking into consideration any other circumstances of trade

or profession, sect or party, religion or country. These considerations may increase the obligation; they can never take it away. As persons of all sects and parties should join in acts of mercy and charity, so persons of all sects and parties too should be allowed to partake of the benefit. You should follow the apostle's exhortation, and endeavor (Gal. VI. 10.) "as you have opportunity, to do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith," to relieve as much as you can all objects, especially the most proper and deserving.

III. We should also remark the manner and circumstances of the Samaritan's behaviour, that we may be the better enabled to follow his example, and "go and do likewise:" and particularly his readiness to relieve and assist a poor destitute helpless fellow-creature, his care and tenderness in conducting him to a house of good reception, and his generosity in maintaining him there, and defraying his expenses till he was recovered and made able again to pursue his journey.

His readiness to relieve and assist a poor destitute helpless fellow-creature is very conspicuous. For he was struck the moment he beheld the traveler lying on the ground, "stripped," and "wounded," and "half-dead." (ver. 33.) "When he saw him, he had compassion on him;" and human nature, unless strangely hardened and depraved

praved indeed, is naturally moved to pity, at the first sight of so wretched an object. It is a kind of secret instinct that riseth in us, almost whether we will or not, before there is time for reason or reflection. But this is merely passive virtue, and humanity as well as religion requires that it should also be active. It is but reasonable to suppose, that the Priest and the Levite would feel, and could not but feel some emotions of pity at the sight of their wounded and dying countryman. But they excused themselves to themselves; they were going upon urgent business; their journey required haste; they were obliged to attend the offices of religion; they had no skill in surgery, and could not be of any real service to the wounded person; it might be dangerous for them to remain longer in that place; the same robbers might fall upon them too; charity begins at home, and it was more prudent for them to consult their own safety than the preservation of a dying man. But the Samaritan was above such selfish considerations, he acted upon nobler motives. He not only "had compassion" on the wounded traveler, but also gave effectual proofs of it; (ver. 34.) "went to him, and bound up his wounds." His business might be urgent, but the necessity of the poor miserable traveler was still more urgent; any delay might be inconvenient to him, but to the other it would prove fatal; the trouble

to himself would be more than compensated by the benefit of the other; he preferred "mercy" before "sacrifice;" he thought that the best religion, the greatest duty was to do good; he could not administer all the relief that he would; but however he would administer all that he could; he was not to be terrified by an uncertain danger from doing a certain duty; the hazard to himself was nothing when compared to saving the life of a man, who must perish very soon, if not immediately assisted. Such also is the case of many persons, who are admitted into your hospital; and if not speedily succurred, would soon be past all remedy. The readiness of the relief and assistance is one principal recommendation of these institutions; and it is certainly much for the ease and benefit of the mind as well as of the body to know where to apply for help in case of need. If the Samaritan had any knowledge of pharmacy, it was happy for the wounded traveler. However we see him "binding up his wounds," and "pouring in oil and wine," which formerly were much used in medicines. You perhaps cannot perform any operation of any kind, but you all know where the best advice and the best medicines may, even in any sudden emergency, be readily obtained. Your hospital is not like the famous pool of "Bethesda," which is supposed to have had salutary effects only at certain seasons; for (John V. 3.)

V. 3.) there "lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water." This house of mercy hath her doors always open to receive and relieve distressed objects; they are almost sure to find present assistance either as in or as out-patients; they have no occasion to "wait for the moving of the water;" and contrary to the case of the poor impotent man in the gospel, who (ver. 5.) "had an infirmity thirty and eight years," the most necessitous are the first to gain admittance. In all societies certain rules and orders for admission must be observed; but casualties and accidents, being subject to no rule or order, obtain immediate admittance, whether recommended or not, at any hour by day or by night. What St. Paul saith of the churches of Macedonia is very applicable to this charitable society (2 Cor. VIII. 3.) that "to your power, yea and beyond your power you are willing" to do good: and you may rest assured of what the apostle farther addeth, (ver. 12.) that "if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

Not contented with having exerted his best endeavors towards assuaging the pains of the wounded

(1) Jerom saith, that Fabiola, a wealthy christian widow, of a noble Roman family, who died in his time first erected a public infirmary; *Prima omnium rectorum instituit, in quo agrotantes colligeret de plateis, et consumpta languoribus*

wounded traveler, the Samaritan farther manifests his care and tenderness by conducting him to a house of good reception. For (ver. 24.) "he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." The word *πανδοχεον*, which we translate *an inn*, signifies in general any house of reception for all sorts of people, and consequently among its other meanings may include *a hospital* for the relief of persons of different sexes, ages, and countries. Whether there were any such things as public hospitals in those early times, is much to be questioned: or rather it may be said, that those early times were strangers to such useful institutions; they are improvements owing to the munificence and charity of later ages; and (1) Christianity hath the honor of the first institution of the kind. If there had been any hospital at that time and in that place, we may be confident that the Samaritan would have conveyed his patient thither, instead of conducting him to an inn, or whatever other house it was of general resort and reception. A public hospital is more efficacious than any private charity for the same reason that the joint efforts of many generally prevail over those of a few. As more concur in its support, so more may partake of the benefit. You may here procure advice and

languoribus atque inedia miserrorum membra foveret. Epist. the Governors of the London
8. Edit. Bened. See Arch-Hospital.

assistance

assistance for a poor patient, restore health to the sick and limbs to the lame, upon much easier terms, than you can by any other method of contribution. What you contribute singly and by itself can go but a little way towards supplying the wants and re-establishing the health and strength of one miserable creature; but when added to the common stock, its good effects may extend to numbers. Here too you are secured from fraud and imposition, and what you bestow is bestowed upon real objects of charity. No man knoweth so little of the world as to be ignorant, that there are abundance of cheats and impostors, who frequent the streets and public ways, and are commonly the most successful, because the most clamorous and importunate beggars. In some measure they resemble other counterfeits of old, the idols of the heathens; (Psal. CXV. 5, 7.) "they have mouths but they speak not; eyes have they but they see not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they but they walk not." Now it is not always easy to distinguish these pretended dumb and blind and lame from those who are really so; and this very thing is often the source of great evil, is a damp and discouragement to charity on the one hand, or occasions a misapplication and abuse of it on the other. But in a hospital the counterfeit is certain to be detected, the real patient only is admitted. As the former can never have the impudence

to

to apply here for relief, so the latter may be assured always here to find it. Here also the poor may have the benefit of such advice and medicines, as it is out of their power to procure in any other place or by any other means. By these means the poor are in some degree put upon a level with the rich, and obtain the benefit, which they could not otherwise do, of assistance from the most able physicians and surgeons; and they both are of mutual service and advantage to each other. The former have the better chance of recovering their health by the skill and experience of the latter; the latter have opportunities of gaining yet farther skill and experience by the various infirmities and diseases of the former.

But the Samaritan's goodness to the wounded traveler did not stop here. He not only conducted him to a house of good reception, but also displayed his generosity by maintaining him there, and defraying his expenses till he was recovered, and made able again to pursue his journey. For (ver. 35.) "on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence" (about 15 or 16 pence of our money) "and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." What was the real character and proper business of this *host* as he is called, this *traveller*, this receiver and entertainer of all comers, it is not easy for us to

determin ; but the Samaritan, we see, had so good an opinion of him that he intrusted his wounded patient to his care, advanced money to him for what he might expend in that service, and engaged at his return that way to repay him for what he might expend more. Here you have greatly the advantage over the Samaritan. The very names and characters of the governors of this charity, their care attendance and application, their ability fidelity and oeconomy are not only above all suspicion, but give the fullest assurance of their executing in the best manner and to the best advantage the great and important trust reposed in them : and every year, like faithful stewards, they submit the state of their accounts, their receipts and payments, and in short their whole proceedings, to the inspection of the subscribers in particular, and of the public in general ; and the more they are examined, the more they are approved. Here also you are assured, that the best care is taken of the health of the poor patients ; and they have the opportunities and advantages of such skilful advice, such proper medicines, such wholesome diet, such cleanly lodgings, such careful nurses, that if they are curable, they cannot well fail of being cured : and the many thousands of sick and lame, who have been discharged from hence whole and sound, are so many living testimonies of the beneficial effects as well as of the benevolent intentions of this institution ; and at the same

time that they silence all censure, transcend all commendation. But your care and attention should not be confined only to the health of their bodies, but should extend likewise to the cure of their better parts, their souls. But in this respect, I am sorry to say, that you are very deficient, and that this is almost the only established hospital in the kingdom, where some provision of this sort is not made out of the general fund. Here it is owing to the particular bounty of some subscribers, and especially the Clergy, and lately of the Corporation and Society of Merchants, that there is a chaplain constantly attending upon the poor patients; and when they are groaning under the diseases which are the consequences of their vices, they will naturally grow weary of the vices which are the causes of their diseases: and christian doctrine, daily prayers, pious instructions, good books must then, if ever, have their due weight and influence, and work a thorough reformation. So that they have the chance of obtaining a double cure, of recovering their strength and reforming their manners, and going from hence not only sounder men, but better christians, more useful to society, more thankful to their benefactors, and to God the benefactor of all. (2 Cor. IX. 12.) “For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the
“faints, but is abundant also by many thank-
“givings unto God.”

Such is the character of the good Samaritan, so worthy of imitation, and so well do you imitate and resemble him. But you are intitled to yet higher commendation. You follow still a greater and better example than this Samaritan. You imitate, as far as you can, your blessed Saviour and Redeemer, (Acts X. 38. Matt. IV. 23.) "who went about doing good, "and healing all manner of sickness, and all "manner of disease among the people." And to animate and encourage us to perseverance in these good works, he represents them as the great and trying articles, upon which chiefly we shall be acquitted or condemned at the last day; and assures us, that what we shall do or not do in this kind to the least and lowest of our brethren, he will accept as done or not done to himself, and will reward or punish us accordingly. On the one hand he will say, (Matt. XXV. 34, &c.) "Come, ye blessed "of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the "world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave "me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me "drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me "in; Naked, and ye clothed me; I was "sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, "and ye came unto me: For verily I say unto "you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one "of the least of these my brethren, ye have "done it unto me." On the other hand he will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into
" ever-

“ everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and
“ his angels : For I was an hungred, and ye
“ gave me no meat ; I was thirsty, and ye
“ gave me no drink ; I was a stranger, and ye
“ took me not in ; naked, and ye cloathed
“ me not ; sick, and in prison, and ye visited
“ me not. For verily I say unto you, Inas-
“ much as ye did it not to one of the least of
“ these, ye did it not to me.” Words there
cannot be more forcible than these to recom-
mend a hospital or infirmary for the sick and
diseased ; and God give us the grace so to show
mercy unto others, that we ourselves may ob-
tain mercy in the great day of the Lord,

S E R M O N VII.

O N M O D E R A T I O N.

Preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in the Abbey Church of Westminster, on Monday, January 30, 1764; being the Day appointed to be observed as the Day of the Martyrdom of King CHARLES I.

Die Martis, 31^o Januarii, 1764.

Ordered,

BY the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, That the Thanks of this House be and are hereby given to the Lord Bishop of Bristol, for the Sermon by him preached before this House yesterday, in the Abbey Church, Westminster; and he is hereby desired to cause the same to be forthwith printed and published.

ASHLEY COWPER, Cler. Parliamentor.

P H I L I P . I V . 5 .

Let your moderation be known unto all men.

AMONG the many apostolical exhortations to universal benevolence and charity, there is none less insisted upon, and yet none deserving to be more insisted upon from the pulpit, than this remarkable one of St. Paul. And this perhaps may be the reason why moderation, though it is so frequently the

the subject of discourse, yet is so seldom the object of understanding. The name is in familiar use, but few appear to have a right comprehension of the thing. We not only mistake it in others, but often in ourselves. Our lukewarmness, indifference, phlegm, dulness, frequently pass with us for moderation; and what is yet stranger, many a fiery furious bigot fancies himself a cool reasonable man, as the greatest persecutors for religion will still (John XVI. 2.) "think that they are doing God "good service."

But if the thing is understood by few, it is certainly practised by yet fewer. Our debates and controversies, our divisions and parties afford but too visible too flagrant proofs of the want of it. And even religion, which should be the bond and cement to unite us all, is become the greatest bone of contention; that which should abate and extinguish all animosities, is made itself to heighten and inflame them most. "Think not that I am come to "send peace on earth," said our blessed Saviour; (Matt. X. 34.) "I came not to send "peace but a sword;" not that this was the intent, but only would be the event of his coming; not that he could properly be the cause of division, such is the perfection of the christian religion; but such is the perverseness of human nature, he should be made the innocent occasion. Religion, like oil, is smooth and soft of itself, but thrown into the fire pro-

duceth the hottest and the fiercest flame. It is so not only in one part but all the world over; christian quarrels with christian as bad as heathen with heathen; not only papists with protestants, but protestants with one another; and it is to be wished, that churchmen themselves had been entirely free from this leaven. (1) I am sorry that these reproaches can be more easily objected to us than refuted.

There being then many who talk and boast of moderation yet do not understand what it is, and there being many more who whether they understand what it is or not yet do not practise it, will for the sake of the former consider *what it is*, and *what it is to make it known unto all men*; and for the sake of the latter we will show *the usefulness and expediency of it*, in order to explain and enforce the precept of the apostle, "Let your moderation be known unto all men."

I. *What is moderation?* is much such a question as Pilate's (John XVIII. 38.) "What is truth?" Like Pilate too we seldom stay to give or receive an answer. The word in the original (2) is capable of different significations, according to which it is differently translated in scripture, so that it is not easy to say what is the precise meaning of it in this place. Our translators seem to have chosen the best word for it, the most comprehensive and expressive of its different significations.

Now

(1) Pudet hæc opprobria nobis &c.

(2) To *emendare*.

Now *moderation* at the first hearing of the word conveys the idea of something opposit to a blind precipitate furious zeal; and yet on the other hand it is by no means to be confounded, nor indeed hath it the least affinity with a lazy undistinguishing unthinking indifference. True moderation is equally distant from both these or any extremes; for one of its principal characteristics is to proportion its esteem of things to their real worth; to be more or less concerned for them as they are more or less valuable; to yield a weaker or stronger assent as there is weaker or stronger evidence; to be indifferent about indifferent things, and to be zealous about things wherein "it is good," as the apostle saith, (Gal. IV. 18.) "to be zealously affected." But though it be zealous for some things, yet it hath no more "zeal" than "knowledge," (Rom. X. 2.) no more warmth than discretion; attends not to one side of a question only but to both; examines without prejudice; argues without passion; differs from others with civility and good manners; though mistaken is never obstinate, though sure is never dogmatical; would rather win by persuasion than prevail by compulsion; preserves a medium and measure in things; avoids every sort of excess and extravagance; is not even "righteous overmuch," as Solomon adviseth, (Eccles. VII. 16.) is not "overwise;" is more for promoting what is equitable than for adhering

hering to the strictness of the law; tempers justice with mercy; softens severity with candor; is rigid to crimes, but tender of persons; punishes the offense, but pities the offender; and under the worst of provocations and sufferings behaves with meekness and patience and gentleness towards all men.

Such are the chief properties of moderation in the different senses of the word; but perhaps the thing may be better understood by example than by description. An example realises the description: and a most perfect one we have in our blessed Lord as of all virtues in general, so of this in particular. For where was he ever for prosecuting private injuries, and punishing the offender according to the letter and rigor of the law? If a man would "smite him on the right cheek," (Matt. V. 39.) he would rather "turn to him the other also." He is once said indeed to have "looked with anger," but then it was not upon his own account, it was for the wickedness of men, (Mark III. 5.) "being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." Where was he ever indifferent when he should have been zealous, or zealous when he should have been indifferent? Where did he ever neglect (Matt. XXIII. 23.) "the weightier matters" of religion, or lay the principal stress upon forms and ceremonies? We find him (Matt. XXIII.) with great sharpness reproofing "the scribes and Pharisees hypocrites." we find him

him driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple with such indignation, that his disciples applied to him the saying of the psalmist, (John II. 17.) "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." And as he could be thus strict and severe when it was proper, so when it was proper too he could be meek and gentle; (Matt. XII. 19.) "He did not strive nor cry, neither did any man hear his voice in the streets;" (1 Pet. II. 23.) "when he was reviled, he reviled not again, when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."

II. But the nature of moderation will be farther explained by explaining *what it is to make it known unto all men*. Which may either signify, not to disguise our sentiments in this particular, not to be ashamed or afraid of acting upon these principles, but publicly to profess them, and to glory in them: or rather may signify, not to confine our benevolence to those alone of our own sect and party, but to enlarge and extend it to all mankind, to distinguish our friends only by superior kindness, to show humanity civility and courtesy to all, (Matt. V. 45.) as "our heavenly Father maketh his sun to rise, and sendeth rain on the good and evil, on the just and unjust." It would exceed the limits of one of these discourses to consider men in all their different relations, and to specify how moderation may be made known to them in all. It will be sufficient

sufficient to give instances in the two main concerns of human life, *religion* and *government*; for under these two general heads the lesser particulars may all be comprehended.

To show moderation to all men in matters of *religion* is not to measure God's mercies by our prejudices, not to reckon ourselves alone the people of God, and exclude all others from the hopes of salvation; but to allow that God is the God of all, that Christ died for all, and men may be saved out of every church out of every nation, if they be careful to frame their lives according to the best light which they have or may have. It is not to dragoon, imprison, torture, or any ways compel men into the faith; but to teach with all gentleness, (2 Tim. IV. 2.) "to reprove, rebuke, exhort" "with all long-suffering and doctrine," (1 Pet. III. 9.) "not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing." As it is not to force, so neither is it to delude men into our communion; to use no frauds pious (as they are called) or impious; to defend the truth only by truth, and to do nothing in the cause of religion that is not perfectly consistent with religion. It is to keep the medium between those who strain ecclesiastical authority too high, and those on the opposite side who depress it too low; neither to infringe christian liberty on the one hand, nor to disobey the lawful commands of superiors on the other; neither to impose superstitious

tious burdensome ceremonies with some, nor yet to quarrel with decency disciplin and order with others. It is equally a friend to a test for the security of the national church, and to a toleration for the ease of protestant dissenters; would rather conform than make a needless schism or separation, would rather indulge scrupulous consciences than oblige to an hypocritical conformity; would promote, as much as it is possible, unity of opinion, and where that cannot be obtained, at least unity of charity. It is neither to build too much on works without faith, nor on faith without works, but to join both together; neither to cry up moral duties to the lessening of positive, nor to contend for positive duties to the prejudice of moral, remembring always (Matt. XXIII. 23.) that "these are to be done and the other not to be left undone." In a word, it is to recommend our holy religion not so much by our profession as by our practice; not to show our zeal for the church by drinking to it, but by frequenting it; not to "trust in lying words," as the prophet expresseth it, (Jer. VII. 4.) "saying The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these." Those are the best and truest sons of the church, who are the most constant to its worship, and live most agreeably to its doctrine. A man of immoral character, let him boast ever so much of orthodoxy

doxy and high church, is the worst of heretics and schismatics.

To show moderation to all men in matters of government, is to make religion and law the rule and measure of authority as well as of obedience. (Rom. XIII. 4, 5.) that princes may govern as "the ministers of God for good," and that subjects may obey "not only for wrath but also for conscience sake." It is to hold the balance even between the prerogative of the crown and the privilege of the subject, and to suffer neither to weigh down the other; to avoid equally the extremes of anarchy and confusion on the one hand, of absolute passive obedience and non-resistance on the other; that the power of the king and the rights of the people may be preserved safe and inviolate from the encroachments of each other, neither government insulted, nor liberty oppressed. It is not to be led away by names instead of things, by party distinction instead of realities; but to regard more what is said than who saith it, what is done than who doth it, and to measure men by their actions rather than the actions by the men; (Rom. XIII. 7.) "to render tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor." It is not to run into the violence and excess of any party; not fondly to think those of our own persuasion, and none else, oracles of wisdom and standards

standards of honesty; neither to magnify all nor depreciate all without exception, as if men were either better or worse than men, or as if there ever were or ever could be any, either so good as to do always what is right, or so bad as to do always what is wrong; but to judge of men and things with temper and candor; to avoid all falsehood, calumny and personal altercation; neither to praise nor to blame without just occasion; to commend what is right, to condemn what is wrong, from whomsoever it may come: to lament vice though in a friend, to honor virtue though in an enemy, and always to conclude, that a bad man can never be a good patriot, he whose private life is infamous, can never adorn a public character. It is to be zealous for the welfare of the nation, jealous of every the least danger to the constitution; and yet on the other hand not to be afraid where no fear is, nor to pretend grievances where there really are none; to make allowances for the difficulties of government, and to render it as easy as we can to our governors; not only to pray (1 Tim. II. 2.) "for kings and for all that are in authority," but also to contribute our utmost endeavors, "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." It abhors faction as much as it desires the public good, is as great an enemy to licentiousness as it is a friend to liberty, knowing that liberty will be ruined by nothing

nothing sooner and more effectually than by the abuse of it; and therefore, (Gal. V. 13.) as "we have been called unto liberty," it is "to use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love to serve one another;" (1 Pet. III. 16.) "as free, and not using our liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God." In a word, it is to be of no party any farther than they are for truth and virtue, for law and liberty, for our king and country; and never to carry our differences from politics into other things, but (Rom. XII. 18.) "if it be possible, as much as lieth in us, to live peaceably with all men."

III. If we know the nature of a thing, we cannot be ignorant of its excellencies; and having thus explained *what moderation is*, and *what it is to make it known unto all men*, there is the less occasion to be particular in showing *the usefulness and expediency of it*, as it was proposed in the last place.

One argument for it may be drawn from the advantages of this temper, from its being the proper disposition of mind to find truth ourselves, and to recommend it to others. It is almost a certainty, that whoever is in a passion is in the wrong; at least he is a bad defender of a good cause, and maketh the best appear like the worst. An argument managed with temper is like Samson's riddle, (Judg. XIV.) honey out of the lion, strength and sweetness mixed together.

Another

Another argument for it may be drawn from the disadvantages of the contrary temper, from the railing and evil speaking, the anger and revenge, the wars and bloodshed, the persecutions and massacres, which all proceed from the want of moderation. For want of this, in the century before the last, were so many fires in Smithfield, so many executions on Tower-hill, both protestants and papists suffered in their turns, both had their martyrs. For want of this, in the last century, a civil war was kindled, a king murdered, and our constitution in church and state overturned. If power had been exercised with more moderation, if prerogative had never overflowed its banks, the stream of government might have run on smooth and gentle, and that spirit would not have been raised in the people, which is so much easier to be raised than to be laid. Or if redress of these grievances had been sought with more moderation, and men would have been contented with all the legal securities which our constitution affords; if when they had drawn the sword against their sovran, they had not likewise thrown away the scabbard; the wounds of the civil war might soon have been healed by treaty, the scars would not yet have been visible, and the condescension of the prince and the temper of the people would have been the theme of future ages. But as Solomon observes, (Prov. XVII. 14.) "the beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water;" you cannot

stop it again, nor know how far and wide it may flow. For not contented with reducing monarchy within bounds that it might no more indanger liberty, they were for entirely destroying it; not contented with pruning excrescences, and lopping off over-grown branches in the church, they were for cutting down the tree and all; not contented with leaving their king little more than the name of king, they tried, condemned, and executed him with all the mock solemnity and forms of justice. They who complained of the "golden scepter" of their princes, now ruled with "a rod of iron," erected new forms of government, instituted new modes of worship, banished the royal family, beheaded the nobles, oppressed the commons, and made our land an "Aceldama" or "field of blood." Twenty years the nation was mad, and hardly recovered its senses at last, if it hath yet recovered them.

Other arguments may be drawn from the clause following the text, "Let your moderation be known unto all men, The Lord is at hand." —The Lord is at hand, (Matt. XXIV. 44.) for in such an hour as you think "not, the Son of man cometh;" and where will be all our little distinctions when we are laid in the grave, or what will the differences of this world avail in the next?—"The Lord is at hand," who was the great preacher of this and its kindred virtues, and requires them as the distinguishing marks of his disciples, men

men being no christians without charity, and there being no charity without moderation. —“The Lord is at hand,” who not only taught, but practised it, (1 Pet. II. 21.) “leaving us an example that we should follow his steps,” who was a *lamb* himself, and will not suffer any of his disciples to be *wolves*, and prey upon one another. —“The Lord is at hand,” who will judge and punish us for nothing more severely than for the want of moderation. And surely if the want of moderation will be a crime more aggravated more heinous in one people than in another, it will be so more especially in us of these kingdoms, who have all reasonable inducements to practise it, living under the government of a most truly religious and gracious King who hath none other design or desire than to make his subjects happy, and enjoying the best constitution in church and state, of any people this day in the world. *h. A. 81. 111. — h. 67.*

I will close this discourse with some passages of scripture illustrating and enforcing the doctrine here advanced; and they are the more memorable, being taken chiefly from St. Paul, whose fervent zeal was exceeded by nothing but his more fervent charity. (Tit. III. 1, 2.) “Put them in mind,” says he, “to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.”

"men."—(1 Cor. III. 3, 4.) "Whereas there
 "is among you envying, and strife, and divi-
 "sions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?
 "For while one saith I am of Paul, and ano-
 "ther I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?"
 —(Rom. XIV. 7.) "For the kingdom of God
 "is not meat and drink," is not forms and
 ceremonies, "but righteousness, and peace,
 "and joy in the Holy Ghost."—(2 Tim. II.
 24, 25.) "And the servant of the Lord must
 "not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt
 "to teach, patient, in meekness instructing
 "those that oppose themselves."—(Gal. VI.
 1, 2.) "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a
 "fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an
 "one in the spirit of meekness, considering
 "thyself lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye
 "one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law
 "of Christ."—(James I. 20.) "For the wrath
 "of man worketh not the righteousness of
 "God."—(III. 17, 18.) "And the wisdom
 "that is from above is first pure, then peace-
 "able, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full
 "of mercy and good fruits, without partiality,
 "and without hypocrisy: And the fruit of
 "righteousness is sown in peace of them that
 "make peace."—(Eph. IV. 31, 32.) "Let
 "all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and
 "clamor, and evil speaking be put away from
 "you, with all malice; And be ye kind one
 "to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one
 "another, even as God for Christ's sake hath
 "for-

“ forgiven you.”—(Col. III. 12, 13.) “ Put
“ on therefore (as the elect of God, holy and
“ beloved) bowels of mercies, kindness, hum-
“ bleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering,
“ forbearing one another and forgiving one
“ another, if any man have a quarrel against
“ any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do
“ ye.”—(2 Cor. XIII. 11.) “ Finally, bre-
“ thren, be of one mind, live in peace; and
“ the God of love and peace shall be with you.”

S E R M O N VIII.

The GOSPEL preached to the POOR:

Preached in the Parish-Church of CHRIST-
CHURCH, LONDON, on Thursday, May 2,
1765; being the Time of the YEARLY
MEETING of the CHILDREN educated in
the CHARITY-SCHOOLS in and about the
Cities of London and Westminster. Pub-
lished at the Request of the Gentlemen con-
cerned in the said Charity.

M A T T. XI. 5.

The Poor have the Gospel preached to them.

JOH N the baptist being cast into prison by
order of Herod, and hearing there of the
fame and miracles of Jesus, he sendeth two of
his

his disciples to inquire of him, (ver. 3.) "Art thou he that should come," Art thou the promised Messiah, "or do we look for another?" It may reasonably be supposed, that the baptist sent his disciples to make this inquiry not so much for his own satisfaction as for theirs. For having seen the heavens open upon Jesus at his baptism, and the Holy Ghost descend visibly upon him; having heard the voice from heaven declaring, (Mart. III. 16, 17.) "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" having himself several times declared of Jesus, (John I. 29, 36.) "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world;" having asserted, (ver. 30.) "This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me, for he was before me;" having so often (ver. 34.) "seen and borne record that this is the Son of God;" he could not well doubt himself whether Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God. If he had any the least doubt or scruple upon this head, it must have proceeded from some despondency and dejection of mind, occasioned by his lying so long in prison, and Jesus never exerting his power to deliver him. But by that repeated expression of his, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," it should seem that the baptist had juster notions of the Messiah than to conceive or expect him as a temporal prince and deliverer: and if he had

really doubted whether Jesus was the Messiah or not, he would not have deserved, nor would Jesus have bestowed, those high encomiums upon him, immediately after his disciples were withdrawn, of being (Matt. XI. 9, 10, 11.)

“ a prophet, and more than a prophet: For
“ this is He of whom it is written, Behold, I
“ send my messenger before thy face, which
“ shall prepare thy way before thee: Verily I
“ say unto you, Among them that are born of
“ women, there hath not risen a greater than
“ John the baptist.” It is more rational therefore to conclude that the baptist sent his disciples to propose this question, not for his own satisfaction but for theirs; they might possibly doubt whether Jesus was the Messiah or not, though the baptist could not well entertain any such scruple; and he might send them to receive ocular conviction, and to prepare their way to another and better master, when he should himself be taken from them. He had often borne testimony to the divine mission of Jesus, and hearing of his manifestation of himself by miracles, he thought this a proper time to send two of his disciples, that they might be convinced of the truth of what he had asserted by their own senses,

Our Saviour doth not return a direct answer to their question. He endeavors to convince them not by words but by works. He performs several miraculous cures before them, and leaveth it to them to draw the proper in-

ference. (Matt. XI. 4, 5.) "Go, and show
 " John again those things which ye do hear
 " and see: The blind receive their sight, and
 " the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and
 " the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and
 " the poor have the gospel preached to them."

It is not only a tacit appeal to his miracles for the truth of his divine mission, but it is an allusion also to the prophecies of Isaiah, wherein the same things are predicted of the Messiah.

The former part refers to that noted passage, (Isa. XXXV. 4, 5, 6.) "Behold, your God
 " will come with vengeance, even God with
 " a recompense, he will come and save you.
 " Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
 " and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped,
 " Then shall the lame man leap as an hart,
 " and the tongue of the dumb sing." The

latter part is plainly taken from this other passage, (Isa. LXI. 1.) "The Spirit of the Lord
 " God is upon me; because the Lord hath
 " anointed me to preach good tidings unto the
 " meek," or "to preach the gospel unto the
 " poor," as it is in the Greek translation.

Consequently Jesus, performing the works of the Messiah, appears undeniably to be the Messiah, and establishes his divine mission upon the double proof of miracles and prophecies, of miracles rendered the more illustrious by being predicted by the Spirit of prophecy. Nay he performs more than was predicted of the Messiah, for "raising the dead" is a particular

lar not mentioned in these prophecies of Isaiah. He farther addeth, (Matt. XI. 6.) " And " blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offend- " ed in me," in reference to the prejudices which they had entertained concerning him, and which he hopeth he had now effectually removed.

Miracles, and especially miracles prefigured by the spirit of prophecy, were the strongest proofs that Jesus could have given of a divine commission, and were the more striking to John's disciples, (John X. 41.) as " John" himself " did no miracle." Among these miracles, it is remarkable that there is mentioned in the last place, as the greatest effort of divine goodness, " the preaching of the gospel to the " poor; the dead are raised up, and the poor " have the gospel preached to them;" as if it was something greater than raising the dead to convert a soul from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. But who are the poor to whom the gospel is preached? Not only the poor in condition, but also poor in spirit, who are lowly in their mind as well as of low estate. " Blessed are the poor in spirit," is our Saviour's first beatitude, (Matt. V. 3.) " for " theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" they are of all persons the best disposed and qualified to receive and embrace the gospel, and to become the subjects of Christ's kingdom. Whereas the case of the rich is very different. (Luke XVIII. 24.) " How hardly shall they that " have

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“ have riches enter into the kingdom of God !” they are of all persons the least fitted and prepared to submit to the doctrines of mortification and self-denial, to renounce the pleasures and vanities of the world, to take up their cross, and follow the captain of their salvation through sufferings. And accordingly we may observe that the first converts to christianity were men of low birth and parentage, of mean education and condition, chiefly poor fishermen, without power or authority to *compel*, without learning or eloquence to *persuade*, men to the profession of a new religion. (1 Cor. 26, &c.) “ Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble were called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty: And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:” and then follows the reason of all, “ that no flesh should glory in his presence;” that as the whole work was manifestly of God, so *man* might not assume any part of the glory.

A stronger proof indeed could not be given of the sincerity and disinterestedness of Jesus, and of the truth of his divine mission, than his first addressing himself not to the rich and learned and mighty of this world, but to the poor, illit-

illiterate and despised part of mankind, and enabling them, not only without human means, but against human means, to propagate and establish his religion in the most considerable parts of the earth! This was never the practice of cunning artful impostors. They usually employ every stratagem to draw in some names of rank and distinction, thereby to recommend themselves with greater efficacy to others: and indeed no man ever yet formed a sect or party that became considerable in the world without first engaging some persons of eminence and authority on his side. It was (Acts XIII. 50.) by "stirring up the honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raising a persecution against the apostles," that the Jews strove to hinder the progress of the gospel at Antioch in Pisidia. It was by the favor and indulgence of christian princes, that the bishops of Rome grew to such a highth of power, that at last they over-topped princes and emperors themselves. Mohammed's first converts and disciples were some of the principal persons of Mecca; and after he had gained them, he began openly to publish his doctrine to the people, enforcing it more by the power of the sword than by strength of argument. But the religion of Jesus was propagated by other means and for other ends, and the less of human art and wisdom, of human power and authority was exerted in it, the more divine it appears, and the diviner still for being so presignified by
the

the Spirit of prophecy. The prophet Isaiah had foretold it, and our Saviour himself hath before us made the application. (Isa. LXI. 1. Luke IV. 18, 19.) "The Spirit of the Lord
 "is upon me, because he hath anointed me to
 "preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent
 "me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach
 "deliverance to the captives, and recovering
 "of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them
 "that are bruised, to preach the acceptable
 "year of the Lord."

After the reading of this passage in the synagogue our Saviour declared, (ver. 21.) "This
 "day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears:" and it may still in some measure be said, "This
 "day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." For though miraculous powers have long since ceased, yet never in any age was a nobler spirit of christian charity exerted than in this age, and in this country. Here are not only various hospitals for the relief and cure of the various maladies and diseases incident to human bodies, but great care is likewise taken of the cultivation of human minds; and innumerable almost is the number of charity schools for the education of poor children, instructing them in the principles of the christian religion, and bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Poor children have also frequent opportunities of being farther instructed and catechised by their respective ministers; so that they are "trained up in the way that
 "they

“ they should go,” and it is their own fault if they “ depart from it” when they are “ old.” Ignorance is not esteemed in this country the mother of devotion ; the people are not therefore kept in ignorance with purpose to render them tame and obedient : but the poor are allowed to have as free use of the scriptures, and as free access to the administration of the word and sacraments, as the rich ; and I know not whether the former are not more constant and regular in their attendance upon the public offices of religion than the latter. Moreover, when the poor are grown old and past work and labor, here are several charitable houses for their reception, where care is taken both of their bodies and of their souls, wholesome food and medicines, pious advice and instruction, are both administered, prayers are duly read and the word is preached, and if they will as duly attend, they may live in peace and die in comfort, fitted and prepared for a happy eternity.

This Society contributes largely to the instruction of the poor, and to the *promotion of true christian knowlege*, by dispersing both at home and abroad, Bibles, Prayer-books, and various sorts of religious tracts, which are afforded upon the easiest terms to the members, who have distributed many hundred thousands of them, (it may reasonably be hoped and believed) to the great advancement of religion and virtue in the world. Nor are their good
instruc-

instructions confined to their own language, but they have printed and distributed more than thirty thousand copies of the Bible in the Welsh language; have procured an edition in Arabic of above six thousand Psalters and ten thousand Testaments, as also five thousand Catechetical Instructions with an Abridgement of the History of the Bible annexed, for the use of the Christian churches in Palestine, Arabia, and the neighbouring countries; have moreover established a colony of German protestants in Georgia, as they have a protestant mission in the East Indies, with a generosity far beyond their ability. So fully do they answer to the title of *the Society for promoting christian knowledge*: and by the blessing of the Holy Spirit upon their endeavors, and those of the other *Society for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts*, (Mal. L. II.) "the name of God" "will" in due time "from the rising of the" "sun even unto the going down of the same" "be great among the Gentiles, and in every" "place incense be offered unto his name, and" "a pure offering."

So many ways is the gospel preached to the poor, but the principal, and the foundation of all future good, are the schools for the education of poor children. For without this pious and charitable institution, how helpless, how wretched would be their condition! Their parents, if they were willing, are yet not able to give them a tolerable education; and what generally

nerally are the consequences but beggary and want, idleness and vice, pilfering and stealing, a flagitious life, and perhaps an ignominious death? Whereas by taking them from their parents, and cloathing and educating them, you may not only prevent all this evil, but happily may prove the occasion of much good both to themselves and to the community. It is easing their parents of a charge, which lieth heavy upon them, but is not felt by the public. It is a double charity to the children themselves, making provision not only for their bodies but also for their better part, their souls, "turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God;" instead of pests and burdens to society bringing them up so as they may become useful members of the commonwealth, instead of vagrants and robbers fitting and qualifying them for servants and apprentices, teaching them to know more and to do better than they would otherwise learn, and thereby enabling them more faithfully to discharge their duty both to God and men. Who that hath the bowels of a Christian, who that hath the heart of a Man, can refuse his liberal assistance to so salutary and laudable a design, the benefits whereof may not only result to the present age, but likewise extend to future generations? The case of these poor children is almost as destitute and forlorn as that of Moses exposed in the waters of the river Nile; and their end may prove more fatal, unless some charitable

charitable hand, like Pharaoh's daughter, should take them up and educate them: and shall an Egyptian do this to a Hebrew, and not a Christian to a Christian? (Phil. II. 1.) "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies," let every man contribute something to so pious and useful an institution, as he hath opportunity, and (1 Cor. XVI. 2.) "as God hath prospered him."

It would be happy, if the children were supported and maintained altogether, that what they learn at school they might not unlearn at home; the numbers indeed could not be so great as they are at present, but the public utility would be much greater. But to benefactions of this nature you may sometimes have heard it objected, that these schools instead of inuring the children to labor and industry, rather train them up in sloth and idleness, that they are instructed in psalmody and other things more than are requisite and becoming, that many useful hands are hereby lost to the public, they are elevated above their rank and condition, and look upon husbandry and menial work and service as employments very much beneath them. These objections, if true, would indeed be material objections; but whatever occasion there may have been for these complaints formerly, I hope the prudence and discretion of the present trustees and governors of these

these charities will effectually refute and silence all cavils of this kind for the future. Religion and labor are the professed design, and ought to be the principal objects of these institutions; not only to keep the children out of the ways of violence and vice, but also to prepare and qualify them, the boys some for servants, some for seamen, some for apprentices; the girls for knitting and sowing and other domestic work and service. To be able to write and read is very useful, and almost necessary in the lowest offices and stations of life. If too much attention is paid to singing, it must be allowed that the time and the pains might otherwise be much better employed. Their singing of psalms in a plain parochial manner is very commendable, but their singing of hymns and anthems after the manner of cathedrals is highly improper, as it can answer no good end or purpose, can afford no real pleasure to the hearers, and give only a wrong turn to the performers, who must get their livelihood by their labor. I would rather be an advocate for their not singing at all, than singing in this manner. This is an abuse therefore that either is, or at least ought to be rectified. Catechising and instructing the children in the principles of religion, teaching them plain rules and lessons of morality, accustoming them to frequent the church and to hear prayers and sermons, bringing them up in the paths of piety and virtue, cannot possibly have any bad, and will probably

be productive of many good effects. For it will ever be found true, that they who have a just sense of their duty to God, will best discharge their duty to men. They will be most faithful to their master upon earth, who remember that they have also a master in heaven. They will be most diligent, most honest, most obedient, (Tit. II. 10.) "not purloining but showing all good fidelity," (Eph. VI. 6.) "not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." Happy it is, when religion and labor go thus hand in hand together: and experience as well as reason will confirm the truth of these assertions. For very few instances can be produced of persons educated in these schools, who have (1 Pet. IV. 15) "suffered as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer:" whereas on the contrary innumerable are the instances of persons, who have risen from hence to honest trades and callings, some even to wealth and honor, and have gratefully bestowed upon others that charity, which they themselves here first received.

Since then there are no just objections against these schools, and so many good reasons and arguments for them, (2 Cor. IX. 7.) "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver." For consider with yourselves, that this is the best

best and most effectual method of protecting innocence, promoting virtue, and diffusing morality among the lower ranks of people.—This is properly bringing young children unto Christ, for though they are made Christians by baptism, yet by instruction alone can they become good Christians.—This is not only (James V. 20.) “saving a soul,” but many souls “from death, converting them from the “error of their ways,” and (Luke I. 79.) “guiding their feet into the way of peace.”—But the benefit will rebound to yourselves the givers, as well as to the children the partakers of your charity. For society is hereby made more secure, easy, and delightful, and the best foundation is laid for peace, order, and good government.—At the same time to a generous mind there is a self-satisfaction in the tender sensations of humanity, you grow happy in proportion as you do good, and experience even more heart-felt pleasure than you bestow.—You follow the amiable example of your Lord and Saviour, who said (Mark X. 14, 16.) “Suffer the little children to come unto me, “and forbid them not, for of such is the “kingdom of God: and he took them up in “his arms, put his hands upon them, and “blessed them.”—You engage the prayers of widows and orphans in your behalf, (Job XXIX. 13.) “the blessings of him that was “ready to perish come upon you,” and what is more, the blessings of God.—Liberal actions

are usually requited even in this life, and what you thus (Prov. XIX. 17.) "lend unto the "Lord" is "paid you again."—At least you (1 Tim. VI. 19.) "lay up in store for your- "selves a good foundation," a good treasure, "against the time to come;" and though the poor and fatherless (Luke XIV. 14.) "can- "not recompense you," yet you shall be fully "recompensed at the resurrection of the just."—You shall be judged at the last great day chiefly by acts of mercy and charity, and what you "do" in this kind "to the least" of these little ones, our Saviour hath declared (Matt. XXV. 40.) that he will accept as "done to "himself."—Finally, by thus promoting the glory of God, the felicity of men, you shall not only attain to bliss and glory, but to the higher degrees of bliss and glory; (2 Pet. I. 11.) "an entrance shall be ministered unto "you abundantly into the everlasting king- "dom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" (Dan. XII. 3.) "and they that be wise shall "shine as the brightness of the firmament, "and they that turn many to righteousness as "the stars for ever and ever."

S E R-

S E R M O N IX.

On the imperfect Reception of the Gospel :

Preached before the INCORPORATED SOCIETY
for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign
Parts ; at their Anniversary Meeting in the
Parish Church of St. Mary-le-Bow, on
Friday, February 17, 1769.

At the Anniversary Meeting of the Society for the
Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, in
the Vestry-room of St. Mary-le-Bow, on Friday,
the 17th day of February, 1769 ;

AGREED that the Thanks of the Society be given to
the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Bristol, for
his Sermon preached this day before the Society ; and that
his Lordship be desired to deliver a Copy of the same to the
Society to be printed.

DANIEL BURTON, Secretary.

J O H N X. 16.

Other sheep I have which are not of this fold.

THERE is a scruple which one time or
other ariseth in the breast, I believe, of
every serious confederate Christian ; and that is,
How cometh it to pass that the Christian reli-
gion is professed only in so small a part of the
world, while Paganism and Mohammedism

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overspread at least three quarters of the globe? Since "there is none other name under heaven whereby men must be saved," (Acts IV. 12.) why is any other name under heaven adored, besides the name of Christ Jesus? Why doth God suffer imposture to prevail so far over truth, the kingdom of Satan over the kingdom of his dear Son? (Jer. XII. 1.) "Righteous art thou, O Lord, when we plead with thee, yet let us talk with thee of thy judgments."

1. Supposing we cannot give any satisfactory account of this proceeding, yet it is not therefore a just objection against the Providence of God. It must be confessed, that the imperfect reception of Christianity in the world is one of the darkest mysteries of divine providence; but because we cannot readily apprehend the reason of God's government, shall we therefore conclude it to be conducted without reason? How can our finite groveling minds fully understand the polity of the supreme infinite mind? "His judgments are like the great deep," (Psal. XXXVI. 6.) not to be fathomed by the short line of human reason. How do we know what mercy God may extend to those who have not heard of the high-priest of our profession Christ Jesus? How do we know but he suffers not the gospel to be preached to several nations, as knowing beforehand that they would reject it, and by these means aggravate their condemnation? Expedients

dients there may be to solve this difficulty more than man can express, more than he can imagin. (Rom. XI. 33, 34.) "O the depth
" of the riches both of the wisdom and
" knowlege of God! How unsearchable are
" his judgments, and his ways past finding
" out! For who hath known the mind of the
" Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?" However of this we may rest assured, that God can as soon cease to be, as cease to do what is best and fittest in the whole: and though (Psal. XCVII. 2.) "clouds and darkness are
" round about him, yet righteousness and
" judgment are the habitation of his seat;" though we cannot enter into the reasons of his dispensations, nor comprehend all the various methods of his dealing with the sons of men, yet infinite justice must act justly, infinite wisdom must act wisely, and infinite goodness must do things which are good and right to be done.

2. But God was not obliged to make a revelation of himself universal. That God made any revelation of himself at all was an act of mere bounty, mercy, and goodness; and surely he may confer his favors in what manner, and at what times, and upon what persons he pleaseth. "I will be gracious," saith the Lord, (Exod. XXXIII. 19.) "to whom I
" will be gracious, and will show mercy on
" whom I will show mercy." God was no more obliged to make all men Christians, than

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he was to make all creatures men, or all men angels: and as he hath manifested his power and wisdom in induing different persons with different tempers and capacities, why might he not as well afford to some more and greater, to some fewer and less opportunities of knowing and serving him? (Matt. XX. 15.) "Is it not lawful for him to do what he will with his own?" "Hath not the potter," as the apostle argueth on this head, (Rom. IX. 21,) "power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honor, and another unto dishonor?"

3. As God was not obliged to make a revelation of himself universal, so he hath foretold by the mouth of his holy prophets, that the Christian religion should not (for some time at least should not) be universal. And what more pregnant, more convincing proofs can we require of this, than those many prophecies of the obstinacy and infidelity of the Jews in the Old Testament, of the distresses and persecutions of the Christians in the New? So that the want of universality is so far from infringing the truth of the Christian religion, that it is absolutely necessary, we see, to confirm it; as that without which these prophecies, and consequently the books containing these prophecies, could not be true.

4. But though God make not a revelation universal, yet hath he not left himself "without witness." Though the scriptures be
not

not put into every man's hands, yet the larger volumes of nature and right reason lie ever open to all mankind. There is such grandeur and exquisite contrivance, such beauty and proportion in this great fabric of the universe, as evidently point out to us the first cause, the all-wise and all-powerful architect. Every thing within us, every thing without us, may lead us one way or other to the knowledge of God and of our duty: and if men however are blindly hurried away by their lusts and passions, and listen not to the dictates of nature and the whispers of conscience, they are "without excuse," and their condemnation will be, that having eyes they would not see, and having understandings they would not understand. Herein I speak the sense of the great preacher to the Gentiles, who declares, (Acts XIV. 16, 17.) that, "though God suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness:" And in another place speaking of the Gentiles he saith, (Rom. I. 19, 20.) "That which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath showed it unto them; For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal

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“eternal power and godhead, so that they are
“without excuse.”

5. Though a revelation be made to some persons only, yet it may be of great service to many others. Christianity operates beyond the sphere of Christendom. At the first rising of the sun of righteousness many even of the Heathens were sensibly reformed, and became better and brighter as it were by reflection. They grew ashamed of their former barbarous rites and superstitious ceremonies; and no longer made use of human sacrifices, no longer offered their sons and their daughters unto devils. It is also very well worth our observation, that morality hath been carried to a greater highth, and the law of nature hath been more rationally explained, illustrated, and enforced by many a one of the philosophers since the coming of Christ, than by all of them taken together before it. And if there is any thing good and excellent in the false religions of the world, it is wholly borrowed from some traditions of the true religion, or derived from that fountain of goodness and excellency, the holy scriptures. Of such signal advantage is the Christian institution even to Pagans and unbelievers; and like its divine author, “blesseth” its very “enemies,” and doeth “good to them” who “despitefully use” it and “persecute” it.

6. Christ’s satisfaction upon the cross was not partial but universal. He died for all mankind

kind in general, as well for those who went before, as those who come after him; as well for those who have not, as those who have, opportunities of knowing him. He is for this reason stiled in scripture "the Saviour of the world." He is upon this account said (1 Tim. II. 6. Heb. II. 9.) to "give himself a ransom for all," and "to taste death for every man." He is by St. John called (1 John II. 2.) "the propitiation for our sins, and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world." As all men were created by him, so by him were all redeemed: as all men were involved in the consequences of Adam's transgression, so all partake of the benefits of Christ's righteousness; or to speak in the words of St. Paul, (Rom. V. 18.) "as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

7. Men will be judged variously, in proportion to their various means and opportunities of knowing and doing their duty. For what justice would it be to expect the same returns of duty and obedience from the rude Indian in his hut, or wild savage in the woods, as from those who have had the advantage of a learned and Christian education, who "from children have known the holy scriptures," and "have been taught as the truth is in Jesus?" Far be it from God, to require impossibilities of any

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any man, or to condemn any man for invincible ignorance. The words of St. Paul are very clear in this point, (Rom. II. 12.) "As
" many as have sinned without law, shall also
" perish without law; and as many as have
" sinned in the law, shall be judged by the
" law;" and afterward, (Rom. IV. 15.)
" Where no law is, there is no transgression;"
where a law is not sufficiently promulged,
there men are not accountable for the violation
of it. Our Saviour and Judge himself saith,
(Luke XII. 48.) "Unto whomsoever much
" is given, of him shall be much required;
" and to whom men have committed much,
" of him they will ask the more:" and again,
(John IX. 41.) "If ye were blind, ye should
" have no sin; but now ye say We see, there-
" fore your sin remaineth."

8. There is scarce any civilized nation, that
hath not one time or other had sufficient op-
portunity of being converted to the Christian
religion. Our Saviour's instruction to his dis-
ciples was, (Matt. XXVIII. 19.) "Go teach
" all nations:" and the writers of the history
of the church all with one full consent and en-
tire harmony agree, that the apostles or their
immediate disciples in their own persons pub-
lished the glad tidings of the gospel through
all the parts of the world then known. St.
Paul himself very aptly applies to them the
elegant saying of the Psalmist, (Rom. X. 18.)
"their sound went into all the earth, and
" their

“ their words into the end of the world.” Within about five centuries after Christ we find the fathers asserting, that (1) the Christians were in all parts of the world far more numerous than both the Heathens and Jews. Nay even in these degenerate times we shall have no reason to think, that the unbelievers are left wholly destitute of the means of coming to the knowledge of the truth; considering that the Christians are of all people the most learned, and hold trade and commerce with all; considering again that there are some Christians or others dwelling in every country, and in all Mohammedan countries the Christian religion is in the highest degree of esteem next to their own; considering farther that there are societies erected for the propagation of the gospel, and missionaries dispatched into several remote parts of the world; considering lastly that there are extant, in all the current languages of the world, translations of the Bible, which are so many pipes and conduits as it were to convey knowledge unto all people.

9. That the gospel therefore is not more generally professed must be charged altogether upon the faults of men, and not in the least imputed to want of foresight or goodness in God. In the proposing of a new revelation

(1) Plures enim jam Christiani sunt, quam si Judæi simul. (St. Aug. de Utilitate credendi, Cap. 19. Tom. 8. Edit. Benedict. &c. &c.)

(2) See

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God dealeth with us like (what he hath made us) free reasonable creatures. He commits no violence upon our faculties, but addresseth himself coolly to our understandings. He affords such evidences of the truth as are sufficient indeed, but not such as are irresistible; such as may easily convince us if we will, but not such as must and shall convince us whether we will or not. Such is the reasonableness evidence and certainty of the Christian religion, that I am verily persuaded whoever calmly considers the arguments urged in defense of it cannot but see and acknowledge its divine origin, believe without doubt and assent without reserve. Whence is it therefore that it doth not find a more general reception? Whence is it that so many withstand its force? Why? because they are too idle or too busy to consider; they think not of it at all, or think with prejudice; they have bad heads or corrupt hearts. Why in particular did the Jews reject the Christian religion? Because they were eaten up with blind zeal and bigotry for their law; and the expectations of a temporal prince had so possessed and swelled their minds, that they could not relish the humble doctrines of the cross. Why still did not the Greeks embrace it? Because they were proud opinionative men, and sought after (what they falsely called) *wisdom*; and (1 Cor. i. 22, 23.) as Christ crucified was to the "Jews a stumbling-block;" so was he to the

the "Greeks foolishness." Why are so many nations which once were Christian become Anti-Christian? Because they did not (see Matt. XXI. 23. Rev. II. 5.) "bring forth the fruits of the gospel," and therefore "the candlestick of the Lord was removed out of its place, and the kingdom of God was taken from them." Why has Mohammedism prevailed so mightily in the world? It is plain the grounds upon which that imposture standeth are the vices and follies of men; it was begot by ambition and lust, was propagated by rapin and violence, and is still upheld by power and authority. And thus (John III. 19.) though "light is come into the world, men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." I wish I could not add that Christianity hath been stopt and retarded in its progress by the heresies and schisms of some, the debauched lives and conversations of others, who profess themselves Christians, but yet are really a scandal to the doctrine of Christ. Had Christian princes been as ambitious of extending the kingdom of Christ, as of enlarging their own empires; had Christian subjects been as zealous to propagate the gospel as to carry on traffic and commerce; and had the lives of all been agreeable to their most holy profession, the Christian religion would not have been confined within these narrow bounds, and those (1 Pet. II.

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12.) who now "speak against us as evil doers," would then, "beholding our good works, have glorified God in the day of visitation."

10. This very want of universality is made to serve several wise ends and purposes of providence. Such is the transcendent wisdom of God, that he can bring good out of evil, light out of darkness, and turn even the infidelity of some into arguments to beget and nourish faith in others. None of the philosophers and princes of the world embraced Christianity till some centuries after Christ: (1 Cor. I.) "not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble were called;" for what reason? "that no flesh should glory in his presence;" that the propagation and establishment of the gospel might appear not to be owing to human means, but to be the work of heaven itself. The infidelity of the Jews renders them perhaps more proper and unsuspected witnesses of the truth of the Old Testament, than if they had been converted to Christianity; for the concessions of a professed enemy generally carry greater force and conviction with them, than the most favorable arguments urged by a friend. The more too are the enemies of our religion, the more is the divine providence manifested in preserving his church, and not suffering, (Matt. XVI. 18.) "the gates of hell to prevail against it." Had "this counsel or this work

“work been of men,” (Acts V. 38, 39.) it would doubtless, in so many ages, amidst so many enemies, have “come to nought,” but “being of God, nothing can overthrow it.”

Lastly, it is foretold in scripture, that the Christian religion shall one time or other be-fore, the end of the world become universal. This, I think, is plainly intimated in the words following my text; “Other sheep I “have,” saith our blessed Saviour, “which “are not of this fold; them also I must “bring, and they shall hear my voice, and “there shall be one fold and one shepherd.” Hitherto, I conceive, are to be referred those promises (Psal. II. 8. LXXII. 11. Dan. VII. 14.) of giving Christ “the heathen for his “inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the “earth for his possession;” of “all kings “falling down before him;” and of “all “people, nations, and languages serving him.” “When the fulness of the Gentiles is come “in,” saith St. Paul, (Rom. XI. 25, 26.) “all Israel shall be saved.” Many and triumphant are the predictions of this kind; for there is no subject upon which the prophets dwell more, or more delight to dwell. At what time and by what methods God will accomplish this wondrous revolution, we cannot say; but accomplish it he will, as surely as he is true. (Numb. XXIII. 19.) “Hath “he said, and shall he not do it? Hath he “spoken, and shall he not make it good?”

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No doubt there are more and greater reasons than these known to that all-perfect mind which governs the universe: but even these (upon each of which I might have expatiated, but have compressed the matter into as narrow a compass as I could) if not singly taken, yet all united, are I hope of force sufficient to lay the objection, and to satisfy us that God may be justified in his transactions, even in the most dark and mysterious of his transactions, with the sons of men: (Rom. III. 4.) "as it is written, that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."

The natural consequence of this discourse is the great duty of promoting, as much as lieth in our power, the universal reign of Christ upon earth. For the imperfect state of Christianity is no just objection to divine providence; it is more properly a reproach to ourselves, and condemns the negligence and indifference of Christians. We are assured indeed by God himself speaking in the prophet (Mal. I. 11.) "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the Heathen, saith the Lords of hosts:" But we must not sit idle and unconcerned spectators waiting for the accomplishment of this prediction,

prediction, under pretence of leaving it to the superior wisdom and almighty power of God. He intends all his predictions to be accomplished by the agency of men; and happy are those men, who shall be the agents and instruments of effecting what providence so graciously intends, and who sharing in the heavenly work shall be sure also to share in the heavenly reward.

We are taught to pray daily, and I suppose every one almost doth pray daily, "Thy kingdom come:" but it is not enough to offer up our prayers, unless we likewise exert our most zealous endeavors; for how can we be thought to pray in earnest, as long as we do nothing more? Not that I conceive we are obliged with the hazard of our lives and fortunes to propagate the gospel in foreign parts; neither must we seek the advancement of our religion by pious leagues and holy wars, by striving to regain with our swords those countries which we have lost by our sins. We are by no means fit for the one, and the other is not fit for us. We are not indued with the gift of tongues and the power of miracles necessary for the former; and as for the latter (2 Cor. X. 4.) "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual." The spirit indeed of Croisades prevailed mightily for some centuries, and set all the princes of Christendom in arms. But we have not so learned Christ, and would we contribute something to the

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extension of the Christian name we must endure conflicts, and obtain victories of another kind. To fight under the banner of Christ against sin the world and the devil; to conquer and subdue our rebellious lusts and appetites; to (2 Cor. X. 5.) "cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God;" to bring our passions into subjection to our reason; to have the free and uncontrolled empire of our minds; to let (Col. III. 15.) "the peace of God rule in our hearts;" these are the wars, these are the triumphs of Christians. The best way to enlarge the kingdom of Christ without us, is first to begin by planting and establishing it within us. For how can we expect that others should be won over to our belief, when we ourselves live as if we believed not? (Matt. V. 16.) "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and" the consequence will be, "they will glorify your Father which is in heaven."

The Christian religion is so salutary and beneficial a scheme, so plainly calculated for the service and interest of mankind as well as for the honor and glory of God, that it is an act of the greatest humanity and charity to plant and cultivate it, wherever we have any opportunity: and to see how happy kingdoms and nations are with it, and how miserable they are for the want of it, we need only

compare the former flourishing state of the churches of Asia and Africa with their present wretched condition, now they are sunk in superstition and ignorance, in slavery and brutality. What barbarians were the people of this island, before ever the light of the gospel shone upon them; and how have we been improved and civilized since in consequence of it? And do we not find in our colonies and plantations abroad, that the people grow less and less savage, and more and more humanized, in proportion as true Christianity is propagated and prevails more among them?

However it may be in other places, here certainly (Matt. IX. 37, 38.) "the harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." We are the more obliged to his tender care and concern for them, as we receive so many benefits and advantages from thence; and (1 Cor. IX. 11.) as we "reap" of their "carnal things," it is but just and equitable that we should "sow" unto them of our "spiritual things." How many have large properties there, and go thither to carry on traffic and commerce; and shall none be found to propagate true religion and virtue among them? The worst of our species, felons and convicts, are transported thither in abundance; and shall we send none of a better character to give them better ideas of us and our religion?

gion? The church of Rome glories in the zeal and number of her missionaries, who (Matt. XXIII. 13.) "compass sea and land" "to make profelytes;" and shall they be more diligent to propagate a false Christianity than we the true? And if we totally neglect our colonies and plantations, will they not soon sink into barbarism and brutality, or become an easy prey to fanaticism, or popery, or infidelity, or atheism, or what not?

But (Rom. X. 14, 15.) "how then shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" Small contributions can hardly be applied at all, and larger benefactions will avail little and lose their effect applied separately; nothing considerable can be done, no great information be gained, no great influence be preserved, but under the direction and conduct of a regular society. Such a society was accordingly erected and incorporated near seventy years ago by a Prince, to whom our religion and liberties owe their preservation: and its primary and immediate object was (according to the words of the charter) "the maintenance of a learned and orthodox clergy" for the administration of the word and sacraments in those of our colonies and plantations, where was either mean provision or none at all for the public worship of God. The design was truly pious and charitable,

ritable, and God hath blessed it with remarkable success. For in those countries, where they had scarcely any form or place of public worship; where even the Lord's day was hardly distinguished from others but by greater idleness and profaneness; where the sacraments were administered, baptism perhaps not above once in twenty years, and the Lord's supper not above once in sixty: there more than a hundred churches have been erected, and more are erecting; there more than a hundred and forty thousand of our people, infants and adults, have been baptized; there more than a hundred and fifty thousand bibles and common-prayer-books, with other pious and instructive treatises and smaller tracts innumerable, have been distributed; many numerous congregations have been set up, who maintain the public service of God at their own expense; and the Society are at the farther charge of more than a hundred missionaries catechists and schoolmasters for the farther propagation of the gospel and instruction of the young and ignorant. So that now there is a goodly appearance of religion; much good hath been done, and possibly more harm prevented; the people are greatly reformed and improved; and it is (2) computed that one third of the inhabitants,

(2) See Dr. Bradbury Chand. behalf of the Church of England's Appeal to the Public in land in America, Sect. 6.

(3) See

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bitants, near a million of souls, are professed members of the church of England.

Another and an early object of the Society's attention were the poor Negroes, whose bodily labor and service justly intitle them to some concern for their spiritual welfare. It was not long after the first institution of the Society, that instructions were given to the missionaries for this purpose, and catechists and schoolmasters were employed, and have proceeded in this good work of teaching and baptizing these Heathen slaves, as far as the difficulty of the thing, and their Christian or rather unchristian masters would allow. From that time to this many thousands of them have been converted to the faith; and they have upon all occasions behaved better, with more fidelity and duty, than their unconverted brethren; whenever any insurrections and rebellions have happened, few or none of the Christian Blacks have been concerned in them. It would be little for the honor of the Society to exhort and admonish others, if they did not themselves, within their own property and plantations, set a good example to other planters and masters, in the management of their Negroes, softening the severities of their servitude, treating their persons with gentleness, as well as forming their minds by seasonable instruction, rightly conceiving humanity to be one of the most effectual methods of conciliating them to Christianity: and it is much
to

to be wished, that the example was more generally followed. A farther improvement hath been made by the Society within these few years, by giving some kind of liberal education to some young Negroes, and training them up in such a manner as may qualify them to become more familiar teachers and instructors of their countrymen; an expedient, which it is hoped, will be attended with considerable success both in Africa and America.

After these more immediate objects of their care and attention, some share of the Society's compassion hath been extended to the native Indians: and notwithstanding the diversity and difficulty of their languages, their wandering life, their gross ignorance, their fierce dispositions, their continual wars, their savage manners, their barbarous customs, their horrid superstitions, yet several of them have been made converts, and some congregations of Christians have been formed among the Mohawks and other Indian tribes. Some of the Society's missionaries and catechists have been at the pains of learning some of the American languages for the readier discourse and communication with the people; and some schools are erecting for their better education and instruction, to civilize in order to convert them.

But yet the designs of the Society are very far from being completed. Many things are wanting to perfect and establish the good work that is begun. With regard to the members
of

of the church of England, they are continually importuning the Society to send over more missionaries, more than their abilities will allow, which is a certain indication that many advantages have arisen from those who have been sent already. But the greatest want of all is that of an American Bishop for the purposes of confirmation, ordination, visitation of the clergy, and other ecclesiastical offices, without the least share of civil power or jurisdiction whatever. Such an institution patronized by so many pious and judicious persons living and dying, and especially by the late most worthy ever to be lamented ever to be honored President of this Society, but indeed what good design did he not patronize and encourage? Such an institution, I say, may be beneficial to many, can be really hurtful to none; and shall all other sectaries enjoy their particular privileges and forms of worship in their full latitude, and at the same time the members of the national church, near a million of souls as I said, a third of the people, be debarred and deprived of what they esteem so material a part of their constitution? Where is the justice, equity, or reason of this proceeding? But there are men who will receive neither law nor gospel from us; who clamor for liberty, but yet are the most imperious of task-masters and tyrants; who contend for the most unlimited toleration for themselves, but yet are to all others most intolerant,

tolerant, wherever they get power into their own hands.

With regard to the poor Negroes, whose number is (3) computed to be considerably above half a million; as it is now generally known and understood that Christianity maketh no alteration in mens civil rights and conditions, but (1 Cor. VII. 20.) "every man" is to "abide in the same calling wherein he " was called," whether he be bond or free; it is to be hoped that the proprietors and planters will be less jealous of their slaves being instructed in the true religion, which will soften and improve their manners, and make them subject not only for fear but also for conscience sake, (Eph. VI. 7.) "with good " will doing service, as to the Lord, and not " to men." Whatever necessity may be pleaded for it, it is greatly to be lamented, that there is any such thing as slavery any where. As Moses said, (Numb. XI. 29.) "Would " God that all the Lord's people were prophets," so I would say, Would God that all mankind were free, that those who are bond were free, and that those who are free may so use their liberty as not to abuse it unto licentiousness!

With regard to the native Indians, a wide field is opened to us by the late treaty of peace. But they must be made men, before they can be

(3) See Dr. Chandler as before.

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be made Christians. To bring them off from their roving courses, and reconcile them to a more settled kind of life; to give them some notions of agriculture, and furnish them with proper implements for it; to teach them such of the more common mechanic arts, as may be the means of their more comfortable subsistence; to open schools in different parts for their farther erudition and improvement; to learn their languages, or familiarize them to our own; to convince them of our concern for their spiritual by our regard to their temporal welfare, by acts of humanity justice and kindness; these will be found to be the most efficacious methods of winning them over to our religion, of (Acts XXVI. 18.)
“ turning them from darkness to light, and
“ from the power of Satan unto God, that
“ they may receive forgiveness of sins, and
“ inheritance among them which are sanctified.”

Great things have already been done by the Society, though their certain annual income is inconsiderable if compared to their certain annual expense; but greater still remain to be done, which indeed can never be accomplished without the charitable contributions of well-disposed persons, without the aid and assistance of government, and without the particular blessing of Almighty God. May God Almighty therefore so dispose the hearts, and
open

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open the hands of you and of all to whom this charity shall be recommended, that it may go on prospering and to prosper; that (2 Theff. III. 1.) "the word of the Lord may have
" free course, and be glorified;" that (Psal. LXVII. 2.) "his way may be known upon
" earth, his saving health among all na-
" tions;" that (Rev. XI. 15.) "the king-
" doms of this world may become the king-
" doms of our Lord and of his Christ; and
" he may reign for ever and ever!"

On the 1st of June 1864, the following was received from the

"he may miss the way and find
 "some of our Lord and of our God," and
 "be of the world as we are," and
 "find" that "the King" "the King"
 "shall" "his loving health" "all the
 "IX. 2) "the way may be known" "the
 "first count" "and be glorified" "the
 "the word of the Lord may have
 "on reaching and to prosper" "the
 "his charity shall be remembered" "that it may
 "open the hearts of you and of all to whom

This image shows a blank, aged, light gray page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf of a book. The paper has a textured appearance with some minor discoloration and small dark spots, possibly due to age or handling. A vertical crease is visible on the left side, suggesting it was once part of a bound volume. There is no text or other markings on the page.

This image shows a blank, aged, cream-colored page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf of a book. The paper has a slightly textured appearance with some minor discoloration and small dark spots, possibly due to age or handling. A faint vertical crease is visible on the left side of the page.

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This image shows a blank, aged, light gray page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf of a book. The paper has a textured appearance with some minor discoloration and small dark spots, possibly due to age or handling. A faint vertical crease is visible on the left side of the page.

This image shows a blank, aged, light gray page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf from an old book. The paper has a visible texture and some minor blemishes or foxing, characteristic of old paper. There is no text or other markings on the page.

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100

C H A R G E S.

I.

On READING the SCRIPTURES.

1763.

C. H. A. R. C. E. S.

ON READING DESCRIPTIONS

C H A R G E S.

On Reading the SCRIPTURES.

My Reverend Brethren,

AT our first meeting together I thought I could discourse to you of nothing more properly than of what is or ought to be our principal study, the reading and study of the holy scriptures. If a man's capacity and genius are discovered by the nature of his studies, I am afraid, the studies of the present age will not give us a very favorable opinion of it. Nothing was ever more futile and trifling than the books which are now most in request. All good reading seemeth to be neglected, but the scriptures most of all; and I am sorry to say it, that some even of ourselves seem more remiss and negligent in this matter than we ought to be whose profession it is to study and explain the word of God. It is the commendation of Timothy, that "from a child he had known the holy scriptures;" (2 Tim. III, 15.) and the earlier a man begins these studies, the more he will be like him (II. 15.) "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." No subject therefore can be more proper more sea-

sonable, as none is more important more deserving to be recommended, than the duty of reading the scriptures: and the better to induce you to the observation of this duty, I will consider the reasonableness of it, and then how it may most successfully be put in practice; first offer some arguments and reasons for being constant and diligent in reading the scriptures, and secondly suggest some plain useful rules and directions for reading them in the best manner and to the best advantage.

I. In the first place I will offer some arguments and reasons for being constant and diligent in reading the scriptures; which arguments and reasons, though they may in some measure relate to Christians in general, yet more particularly appertain to us of the Clergy. And to suppose the lowest that we can suppose, we should find it extremely well worth our while to be conversant in them if they were nothing more than human compositions. But they challenge a greater regard from us as they are of divine inspiration. By them too, and by them only, we can attain a competent knowledge of our religion, and be sufficiently instructed in all saving necessary truths. Nay, they will not only teach us all saving necessary truths, but are farther “pro-
“fitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correc-
“tion, for instruction in righteousness, that
“the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly
“furnished

"furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. III. 16, 17.)

1. I say, supposing the lowest that we can suppose, we should find it extremely well worth our while to be conversant in the scriptures, if they were nothing more than human compositions. For considered only in that light they have excellencies sufficient to engage every intelligent reader; and such an one can employ his time and attention no where I will venture to say more agreeably as well as more usefully. We are freed from the drudgery of labor, trade, and business, that we may devote our time more attentively to study and reading; and what reading is comparable to the word of God?

If you are pleased with *history*, where have you any near so ancient? where can you find so regular a series for so many ages together, and ages whereof all other accounts are dark and fabulous? a series of events the most remarkable both for their greatness and variety; and the more it is examined, the more probable, more rational, more authentic still doth it appear. As it is written with the greatest plainness and integrity, so likewise with the truest majesty and beauty. Doth not the great critic Longinus, though an heathen, admire the sublimity of the Mosaic history of the creation? How unaffected and natural and lively is the account of the patriarchs; and particularly in what an exquisite manner and with

If you are delighted with *oratory*, where can you find bolder tropes and figures than in some of the prophets? doth not (1) Longinus himself reckon among the most eminent orators Paul of Tarsus, the patron as he says of an opinion not yet fully proved? and who can attentively read our Saviour's discourses, such short and instructive precepts, such apposite and lively parables, such decent and proper answers upon every occasion, and will not readily agree to the truth of that saying (John VII. 46.) "Never man spake like this man."

If you are charmed with *poetry*, where have you finer images and descriptions than in the book of Job? where are any tragic strains so mournful and tender as the Lamentations of Jeremiah, or David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan? What fables or parables of Æsop or any of the ancient mythologists are comparable to Jotham's of the trees, to Nathan's

(1) *πρὸς τὸν Πάυλον τὸν Ταρ-
σεύς, ὁὖν καὶ πρῶτον φημι πρὸς, u-*
terea Paulus Tarsensis, quem
et

than's of the ewe-lamb, and to several in the gospels? and what are the finest compositions of the lyric poets, how cold and unpassionate in comparison with some of the psalms, and the songs of Moses, and of Deborah and Barak, and other hymns in scripture?

If you admire *short sentences and wise sayings*, in what authors ancient or modern is there such a treasure as in the book of Ecclesiasticus and the proverbs of Solomon? No books contain shorter and more excellent rules of life, no books are fitter "to give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowlege" and discretion." (Prov. I. 4.)

And for morality there is none so pure and genuin as in the scriptures. In the best of the heathen moralists there is a mixture of good and bad, but the gospel is all truth, without the least tincture or alloy of error. Morality before was to be learned here a little and there a little in various writings of various ages; but it is all collected as it were into one body in the gospel. It was before taught doubtfully and imperfectly, and shone but faintly in the world; but it is now advanced and improved to the utmost perfection, and like the sun irradiates and illuminates all mankind. So very well worth our while would it be to be conversant in the scriptures, if they were nothing more than human compositions: but

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2. They

et primum dico præfuisse opi- In fragment. p. 260. Edg.
nioni argumentis non probatæ. Pearce in 8vo.

2. They challenge a greater regard from us as they are of divine inspiration. For if God condescends to speak unto men, the least surely that we can do is to be attentive and ready every one of us to say with Samuel (1 Sam. III. 9.) "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." "Whatsoever things were written aforetime (Rom. XV. 4.) were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." The very writing of them infers an obligation upon us to read them: and to slight and neglect them, is it not to frustrate the gracious ends and designs of providence? is it not a neglect and contempt of the Almighty? We are with reason fond of the productions of great geniuses, which are the effects as I may say of natural inspiration, and of "that light" (John I. 9.) which lighteth every man who cometh into the world: and shall we not be more curious and attentive, when supernatural powers plainly evince a supernatural inspiration, and "holy men of God (2 Pet. I. 21.) speak" and write "as they are" more immediately "moved by the Holy Ghost." What can be of greater concern and consequence to us to know than the will of God, the measures of our duty here and the conditions of our happiness hereafter? and what is all other reading in comparison of this and without an eye to this, but only a more ingenious sort of trifling? It is the character of a good

a good man given by the psalmist, (Psal. I. 2.) that "his delight is in the law of the Lord, " and in his law doth he meditate day and " night." The Jews were commanded to be very diligent in reading and learning the scriptures; (Deut. VI. 6, 7.) "These words which " I command thee this day shall be in thine " heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently " unto thy children, and shalt talk of them " when thou sittest in thy house, and when " thou walkest by the way, and when thou " liest down, and when thou risest up:" And do not equal obligations lie upon us Christians? "Search the scriptures," says our Saviour; (John V. 39.) we must not barely *read*, but we must *search* them with all diligence and attention; and to this we of the Clergy are more particularly called. "He that hath ears to " hear, let him hear" is often repeated. Nothing but a total want of capacity can excuse any man. "Blessed are they that hear the " word of God and keep it," says our Lord (Luke XI. 28.) upon another occasion. And what St. John says of a part is applicable to the whole; (Rev. I. 3.) "Blessed is he that read- " eth, and they that hear the words of this " revelation, and keep those things which are " written therein." Indeed if we could know the will of God as well any other way, there would be no such absolute necessity for reading the scriptures: but

3. It is by them and by them only that we can attain a competent knowledge of our religion, and be sufficiently instructed in all saving necessary truths. "The scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation;" (2 Tim. III. 15.) and in order to this end it is better to read them without all other books, than all other books without them. Away then with systems and bodies of divinity; the best body of divinity is the bible, and the only one that I would recommend to your constant study and meditation. For the word of God only is infallible; men are liable to deceive and to be deceived. The word of God comprehends the whole of religion, all that we are to believe, all that we are to do, without any vain redundancy on the one hand, without any material deficiency on the other: but in the comments and expositions of men there is always either too little or too much, something omitted that should be inserted, or something inserted that had better been omitted. The word of God is all consistent, uniform, and harmonious; but there are fathers against fathers, councils against councils, the church of one age and country against the church of another age and country; and they disagree not only one with another, but are often even at variance with and contradict themselves. "Lord to whom" therefore "shall we go?" (John VI. 68.) thou hast the words "of eternal life." Who so become a Platonist or Aristotelian, would not have recourse to
 Plato

Plato and Aristotle before all the critics and commentators upon them? and where can we better learn the doctrines of the gospel than in the gospel itself? Why should we hew ourselves out "cisterns, broken cisterns which can hold no water," (Jer. II. 13.) when we may drink purer and clearer at the fountain-head? What are the effects and consequences of not reading and understanding the word of God, but infidelity and profaneness in some, and an great credulity and superstition in others? And particularly what absurd things are the people made to believe in the church of Rome, only for want of a little better knowlege of the scriptures? The scripture may say, as our Saviour said (John XIV. 6.) "I am the way; and the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the father but by me?" Moreover

4. They will not only teach us all saving necessary truths, but are farther "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—They are profitable for *doctrine*, not only to teach us as it was said all necessary truths, but to instruct us in such other parts of divine knowlege, as may be useful to us and contribute to our improvement and happiness: and to a man who shall attentively read and consider them, no farther arguments will be wanting of their truth and divinity; the internal evidence for our religion will

will appear as irrefragable as the external, the signs and miracles which attended it.—They are profitable for *reproof*, to inform and awaken mens consciences, to show themselves to themselves, to convince them of their errors and of their sins, being the standard of truth and rule of duty.—They are profitable for *correction*, to reform and amend our manners, to comfort the feeble-minded, to support the weak, to make strait the crooked, and to raise up them who are fallen.—And they are profitable for *instruction in righteousness*, not only to reclaim us from all evil, but to improve us in all holiness, to stablish us in every good word and work, (Eph. IV. 13.) “till we all come in the unity
 “ of the faith and of the knowlege of the Son
 “ of God unto the measure of the stature of
 “ the fulness of Christ.” And shall such inestimable pearls be cast before swine? shall we not rather (Phil. III. 8.) “count all things
 “ but loss” in comparison of “the excellency
 “ of” this “knowlege of Christ Jesus our
 “ Lord?” There was only one plausible argument ever urged against reading the scriptures, which is their obscurity; and that rightly considered is rather an argument for reading them. For wherein doth their obscurity consist? They are plain and easy to be understood in every thing essential and necessary to salvation, and not only in essentials but in many things also which are not necessary but only profitable unto godliness: and those passages which are
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left obscure are left obscure for this reason among others, to prove our industry and faithfulness, to engage the attention of curious and contemplative minds, and to furnish inexhaustible matter after all their searches still for more researches. "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ (Heb. VI. 1.) let us go on unto perfection." No study or contemplation can be more honorable for men, for these are things which (1 Pet. I. 12.) even the "angels desire to look into."

II. You see the expediency and necessity of being constant and diligent in reading the scriptures; and let me now in the second place suggest some plain useful rules and directions for reading them in the best manner and to the best advantage; which rules and directions I would be understood to propose chiefly for the use and benefit of the younger Clergy and those who are yet beginning their studies. I would not presume to instruct those who are as capable of instructing me. But before all rules and directions I must suppose that you are able to read the scriptures in the original languages. If you have not already attained, it should be your endeavor to attain this knowledge, which is the best and indeed the necessary key to open to you the true sense of the scriptures. All translations are defective; our English translation may with reason pretend to as much perfection as any other; but no man, I believe, will presume to justify it in all respects.

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1. The first rule to be recommended is to bring with you an honest disinterested mind, as free from prejudice and prepossession as you can, to the reading of the scriptures. For prejudice like the jaundice diffuses its own color on every object that it surveys; and when men come to the scriptures full of their own prepossessions and with a bias a certain way, they incline and draw all that way; they endeavor not so much to find out the true sense of the scriptures, as to accommodate them to their own sense; and instead of conforming their religion to the word of God wrest and pervert the word of God to favor their religion. An honest unprejudiced mind is a necessary qualification for a learner of all truth and especially of divine truth, to the reception and entertainment whereof there seemeth to be as much need of a good heart as of a good understanding. We should come to the study of divine truth, with minds as clear and untainted, as free from partiality, as open to conviction, as susceptible of good impressions, as in the state of childhood: and this is what St. Peter recommends when he says (1 Pet. II. 2.) "As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby;" this is what our Saviour requires when he says (Mark X. 15.) "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

2. Another rule to be recommended is to begin with reading the plainest and easiest parts,
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and so by degrees to proceed to those which are more obscure and difficult. This method we observe in learning all other arts and sciences, and we should do the same in the study of the scriptures. In the Old Testament it is best to begin with the *psalms* and the *proverbs* and the like, then to read the *historical* books as they stand in order of time, and to conclude with the *prophets*, whose subjects often oblige them to be more obscure than other writers. In the New Testament (the greater part whereof should be read before the Old) the *gospels* are the most proper introduction, the acts of our Saviour are fitly succeeded by the *acts* of his *apostles*, and the acts of the apostles prepare the way for their *epistles*; the epistles should be read as much as may be according to the order of time wherein they were written, and the *Revelation* as it is placed last of all should last of all be read and studied by us.

3. It is another good rule to mind the *context* as much as you can, and never to regard the division into chapters and verses. For as the sacred books were originally written without this division, so they should be read as much as may be according to the original. It is certain that such a division disjoins the sense, and disturbs the reader; and you can sooner discover the meaning in a continued discourse than in detached and divided sentences; as you can see better through a whole glass than a broken one. Consider therefore the context as well

well as you can stripped and divested of chapters and verses; and peruse a whole book or epistle together, if you have leisure and opportunity, by which means you will better see the drift of the author, and more easily comprehend his meaning, than by reading one part at one time, and another at another. This was the method that Mr. Locke pursued in his paraphrase and notes upon the principal of St. Paul's Epistles, and by this very thing he hath done more towards clearing and ascertaining and fixing their sense than any commentator, I had almost said than all the commentators before him.

4. It will be a farther help and assistance to compare scripture with scripture, the writings of one author with another, of the same author with himself, and so to make the word of God as much as possible its own interpreter. It is necessary indeed to consult the critics and commentators upon some passages; but they are often silent where there is any real difficulty, and are sure to be very prolix and tedious where there is none. They puzzle more than they explain; and put you upon so many different scents, that you are in danger of losing the true one. You will best understand the word of God by conferring it with itself, and (1 Cor. II. 13.) "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." And the better to assist us in this comparison, our bibles (especially the quarto bibles) are printed with copious references

rences in the margin; so that if you happen not to understand any text, you may turn to others of a similar nature, and what was obscure by itself may perhaps be cleared up to you by comparing it with others. For these references in the margin of our bibles, as well as for the chronological table at the end, we are chiefly indebted to the very learned Bishop Lloyd of Worcester, who was eminently well skilled in these studies, and understood the prophecies and other obscure parts of Holy Writ better perhaps than any man of his time.

5. As you should judge of revelation by reason, and receive nothing as the sense of divine revelation that contradicts natural reason; so you should judge of any part of revelation according to the analogy of the whole, and be sure never by your interpretations make God the author of contradictions. Who that carefully observed this rule, could ever believe transubstantiation on the one hand, or justification by faith alone without good works on the other? the former so contrary to all sense and reason, the latter to the whole tenor of divine revelation, though countenanced perhaps by the letter of a text or two in scripture. "Let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith," says the Apostle; (Rom. XII. 6.) let us interpret all the parts of holy writ according to the *analogy of faith*, so as to correspond and agree with the whole and with one another.

6. Never

6. Never depart lightly from the general received interpretation of any text, and especially if it was the interpretation received in the three first ages of the church; when the stream of tradition might be supposed to run purer than now at this distance from the spring and fountain. It is true indeed that every man must judge for himself, and ought to be singular in the truth, rather than err with a multitude, or follow the most venerable names in the wrong. But then I say that he should not depart from the general opinion *lightly*, and without very good reason on his side. A modest man, though in the right, dissents from the rest of mankind not without some pain and uneasiness; and is never better satisfied with his own reasonings than when they are generally approved and confirmed by others, especially by those who have had the reputation of wise and good men in all ages.

7. If you happen not to understand any passage at first or second reading, do not therefore desist, but reconsider it at other times; and after all if you are still unsatisfied and dubious of the meaning, ask the opinion of others, and particularly of those who have made these things more their study, and therefore may reasonably be supposed to know them better than other men. A living interpreter is better than a dead one; and difficulties are more easily resolved, and satisfaction sooner obtained, by a personal conference and a few short questions and answers,

swers, than by hearing long harangues, and reading whole volumes of annotations. If any difficulty therefore remains with you in reading, apply to those who are more conversant in these matters, and persons of a benevolent spirit will take pleasure in instructing you, for nothing is a more charitable or godlike office than to propagate truth and communicate knowledge.

But 8. above all beg of the God of truth to direct you in the study and search of truth. That Holy Spirit who first indited the scriptures, can best open our minds to understand them; and he hath promised his gracious assistance to as many as shall ask it of him in prayer. If therefore (James I. 5.) “any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”

Finally as you should endeavor to understand the word of God in order to put it in practice, so you should put in practice in order to the better understanding of it. “If any man will do his will (John VII. 17.) he shall know of the doctrine.” Virtue promotes truth, as truth again promotes virtue.

“And now brethren, (Acts XX. 32.) I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them who are sanctified.”

C H A R G E II.

On the Increase of P O P E R Y.

1766.

My Reverend Brethren,

YOU cannot but be sensible, that many and grievous complaints have been made lately of the great growth and increase of Popery in this kingdom. Even the public papers have rung out the alarm-bell in the ears of the people from one end of the land unto the other. We cannot indeed be too much alarmed, nor too much upon our guard against any advances of so corrupt a religion, which is no less an enemy to our civil than our religious liberties: but yet on the other hand we should not run away with an unreasonable panic, nor multiply difficulties and dangers beyond their due proportion; for I cannot but hope and believe, that the cry hath exceeded the occasion, and a greater alarm hath been spread than the truth of facts will justify. I was desirous therefore of learning the real state of the matter within my own diocese, as you may perceive by the purport of one of my queries; and I trust the result will prove as favorable, as I know it hath done in some other dioceses upon the like inquiry. Some persons, who are of no religion
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at all, yet pretend a mighty zeal for the protestant religion, merely for the pleasure of finding fault and bringing railing accusations against their superiors. The fears of weak protestants, the hopes of sanguin papists, may both concur in producing the same effect, in apprehending and representing the number of the latter to be much greater than it is in reality. Not but I suppose that their number may have increased of late years, especially among the poorer sort; and it behoves and becomes us of the Clergy particularly to consider what may have been the causes and occasions of it. I would not inquire into the causes of the growth and increase of popery in general, (a volume would hardly suffice for so copious a disquisition) but only into such causes as are more peculiar to this time, that so we may furnish ourselves and the people committed to our care with proper antidotes against the spreading of this poison.

I. One cause without doubt is the late arrival of so many Jesuits in this country, who having been driven from other kingdoms, have taken shelter in this land of liberty. Never was there a set of men that acted more contrary to their name and profession. They call themselves by the name, and profess themselves the peculiar disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus; but they are in reality, and have been from their first institution, the pests and incendiaries of the world. They have filled all

the courts, all the kingdoms of Europe with their plots and intrigues, their assassinations and murders: erect every where a dominion within a dominion: and, where they can out of the reach of the civil power (1), in South America, they are laying the foundations of what may perhaps one day prove the greatest empire upon earth. It is no wonder therefore that so many princes grown jealous of their continual encroachments and usurpations should banish them from their dominions, and that England should prove in this instance, what it hath been in many others, the sink and receptacle of all vices. The lenity of the government invites them hither; and they have the gratitude and generosity to return all the evil they dare for all the good they receive. It cannot be presumed or expected, that such turbulent spirits, who cannot live quiet under princes of their own communion, should ever become loyal subjects to those of a different religion. But yet, artful and insinuating as they are, they will have the cunning and address to show themselves as little as possible, till a favorable opportunity shall offer itself. Like moles they work underground, undermining the faith and consciences of as many as come in their way: and their operations are visible, while they themselves remain unseen. It is the more difficult

(1) Since the delivery of this Charge, the Courts of Spain and Portugal have wisely united their forces to extirpate these

ficult to guard against them by reason of the variety of shapes which they assume, and the surprising changes and metamorphoses which they undergo. They seldom appear in their proper characters; sometimes they mingle among fanatics and dissenters of every denomination and are themselves the loudest in declaiming against Popery; sometimes they descend to the lowest trades, the meanest offices and employments; and in the worst sense of the words "become all things to all men that they may by all means gain some." They take as many forms as Proteus, and like Proteus too they must be manacled and bound, before they will return to their own shape, and confess the truth. But the greater their artifice and disguise, their zeal and activity, the greater also should be our attention and caution, our diligence and assiduity in forewarning and forearming our people against their wiles and stratagems, admonishing and exhorting them (Matt. VII. 15.) "to beware of false prophets, which come to them in sheeps cloathing, but inwardly are ravening wolves;" (Ephes. VI. 11.) to "put on the whole armour of God, that they may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil;" (1 Pet. V. 8.) to "be sober," to "be vigilant, because their adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour."

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these Fathers out of Paraguay; grown up to a rivalship in or they would in time have power and dominion.

It is a breach of charity to think ill of another man before you know him, but it is no more than prudence to suspect a Jesuit. If he happens to be a good man, it must be owing to the goodness of his nature, his education and principles have a contrary tendency and effect.

II. Another thing, that may have contributed not a little to the increase of papists, is the number of Methodists; for from methodism to popery is a natural and easy transition. The primary and capital fault of methodism is, that it unhinges and unsettles mens religious principles; and when they are once unsettled, they seldom know how to settle again. They are "like the troubled sea when it cannot rest," tossed and agitated by contrary winds, as they are by contrary doctrines: but they cannot always be floating thus in the wide ocean of doubt and uncertainty: as it is fabled of the island Delos, they must fix at last, and where are they so likely to fix as upon the rock of an infallible church, which promises easy absolution and certain salvation? You scarce ever see the Methodists, with all their sufficiency and presumption, rightly satisfied in their own minds, for enthusiasm never knoweth where to stop; they still require something more novel and extraordinary, they still want new illuminations new assurances, they proceed from absurdity to absurdity, from one degree of fanaticism to another, and so become Moravians, and then Sandi-

Sandimaniacs, after all terminate, as it happens, in popery or in madness. This instability in religion is giving the suttle Priest and Jesuit the advantage that he would desire.

Hoc Ithacus velit, et magno mercentur Atridæ.

He would not wish to put his sickle into a more plenteous harvest. And as it is very well known that Popish priests and friers constantly mingled among the puritans and sectaries of former ages, why should we not conceive the case to be the same at present? Sic notus Ulysses? Is the Jesuit no better known? Hath his right hand forgotten its cunning? Or is he, who watcheth all opportunities, likely to neglect and forego such advantages? The effects of the contrary conduct are too visible: and indeed methodism and popery are so similar, so congenial, that the one readily mixes and incorporates with the other. As certain colors are more naturally transmuted, and take one dye or tincture better than another; so a methodist is more than half prepared, and is most easily dyed a papist in grain.

Fanatics of all ages and countries are nearly related, and bear a strong resemblance to each other: but the parallel is most remarkably striking between the saints of Methodism and the saints of Rome. Their doctrine concerning regeneration and the new birth—their teaching of justification by faith alone not only to the exclusion but even to the condemnation of good

works—their pretended profession of poverty—their corporal severities and mortifications—their itinerant spirit and compassing sea and land to make profelytes—the boasted success of their ministry—their sudden and instantaneous conversions—their assurances of pardon and salvation—their unspotted and unfinning state of perfection—their inspirations and revelations and familiar communications with the divine persons—their extasies and raptures, apparitions and visions—their comparing themselves with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and even with Christ himself—their great want of charity, and condemning all who differ from them—their secret confessions—their unseasonable assemblies, love-feasts, and nocturnal mysteries—all these and many other principles and practices are so much alike, so much the same in both religions, that there is hardly any change from the one to the other. I would not enter farther into the particulars, for you may see them deduced at large with ample proofs and illustrations by a late reverend and learned Prelate in a work entitled *The enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared*.

We should be sedulous therefore to guard our people against methodism, as we would guard them against popery; (2 Tim. IV. 2, 3.)
 “preach the word, be instant in season, out
 “of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all
 “long-suffering and doctrine; for the time
 “will come,” yea is already come, “when
 “they

“ they will not endure sound doctin, but after
“ their own lusts shall they heap to themselves
“ teachers, having itching ears.” “ Where-
“ fore rebuke them sharply,” as the apostle
saith (Tit. I. 13.) “ that they may be sound
“ in the faith ;” (Heb. XIII. 9.) that “ they
“ be not carried about with divers and strange
“ doctrins ; (Eph. IV. 14.) that “ they be
“ no more children, tossed to and fro, and
“ carried about with every wind of doctrin,
“ by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness,
“ whereby they lie in wait to deceive ;” (Rom.
XVI. 17.) that they “ mark them, which
“ cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the
“ doctrin which they have learned, and avoid
“ them ;” (2 Pet. III. 17, 18.) that they
“ beware lest they also being led away by the
“ error of the wicked, fall from their own
“ stedfastness, but grow in” real “ grace, and
“ in the” true “ knowlege of our Lord and
“ Saviour Jesus Christ.” Every tabernacle of
methodists is in truth a school and seminary
for papists ; and the teachers, whether they
know it or not, are agents and factors for po-
pery ; and they seem to be possessed by the
same spirit, as they aspire to the same domi-
nion and lordship over God’s heritage, af-
fect the same powers privileges and preroga-
tives, excell in all the same arts of sophistry
and evasion, equivocation and mental reserva-
tion, make the same merchandize of the word
of God, usurp the same authority over the
purses

purfes and consciences of their disciples, drain the few rich and wealthy of their substance, wring even from the hard hands of poor laborers and servants their small pittance, and by all means make their religion their gain, or it would be no religion for them. Vanity may have some share, but the principal end and motive is "filthy lucre." The people may be deceived, but the teachers must be deceivers, or enthusiasts, or both. Charity herself cannot invent any other distinction.

III. As the third cause of the spreading of this contagion, we may reckon the non-execution of the laws against Popery and Popish priests. One of the most melancholy symptoms of this time, and big with ruin and destruction to this or any country, is that total neglect of all order and disciplin, that entire relaxation of all government and authority, so that we are almost reduced to the same condition, as when (Judg. XVII. 6.) "there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes." No laws whatever are duly executed, except some few perhaps relative to the public revenue, and the game laws which are altogether supported by private associations. Every good man sees and laments this disorder, but no man in good earnest applies a helping hand to remedy it. Such being the state of the laws in general, we have the less reason to wonder at the little regard paid to those particularly relating to religion,

gion; when religion itself is no more regarded. Modern statesmen are too apt to consider religion as nothing more if they consider it so much as an engine of politics: And the Popish nobility and gentry usually giving their interest in elections to the ministers of state for the time being whoever they may happen to be, the ministers in return favor them with their connivance and indulgence; and when any attempts are made to check and restrain them, they who should be the first to promote the due execution of the laws, are often the first to prevent and defeat it. I have never known but one minister superior to these paltry considerations, Mr. Grenville by name, who supported me with his authority in suppressing a mass-house which was going to be opened at Bristol. The laws indeed against the papists are so severe, that one would not wish them to be strictly executed but for the same wise reasons of government, for which they were at first enacted. The danger was then imminent; it is now more remote; and the laws therefore may reasonably admit of some relaxation. If we suffer papists to live among us, we must suffer them in some measure to exercise their religion; we must suffer them to have some schools for education of their children, unless we should oblige them (which would be worse policy) to send their money and their children abroad. But then they should take and enjoy these liberties with some kind

kind of modesty and decency, in a private manner and in private houses. If they presume to erect public schools and mass houses, if they set up openly to make converts, if they publish such impudent abusive lying histories as *the life of Cardinal Pole*, if any way they fly in the face of authority and insult the established religion, then it should be made appear, that the law is not dead but sleepeth, and that (Rom. XIII. 4.) "the magistrate beareth not the sword in vain." The laws are made so severe against them, not upon a religious but a civil account, not as enemies to the truth but as enemies to the state. They who refuse to pay the allegiance of subjects, have certainly no right to claim the privileges of subjects. They who will not tolerate but persecute all others, are not intitled to toleration themselves. Persecute them again we should not, but we should at least secure ourselves: And for this purpose it would be an employment worthy of the legislature, to revise the laws relating to popery, and to consider what may be proper to be repealed, and what to be enforced, and to enforce them. Private persons it would ill become to direct their superiors; but we may all pray unto God, that "it may please him to bless and keep the magistrates, giving them grace to execute justice and to maintain truth." They have the best of examples in the Prince now upon the throne; and if his magistrates were

were but half as good as he is, we should be the happiest of nations.

IV. and lastly. But the blame should not be transferred altogether upon others; some part of it, I am afraid, my reverend brethren, must be charged to our own account. Not that any of us, I hope, are directly the cause; but several, I fear, prove undesignedly the occasion, of spreading popery among our people. Though we may not actually promote it, yet we do not sufficiently hinder it. That dissipation of thought, that eagerness after pleasure, that indifference to religion, which are some of the distinguishing characteristics of the present age, have taken possession of too many of the clergy. They seem to have no notion of the reserve, the decency, the gravity of deportment becoming their character; they are not canonical so much as in their dress; they mix in parties of pleasure and diversions as much as other men, neglect their studies, and what is worse, neglect even the necessary duties of their calling: And when the clergy are thus indifferent about religion, what can be expected of the laity? Too little religion as well as too much is almost a sure and certain way to popery. As all good learning is too much neglected, so particularly the controversy between the papists and protestants is not studied nor understood, as it ought to be. It is now reckoned in some measure unfashionable to preach against popery. Sermons

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are now generally calculated more for entertainment than instruction, more to give no offense than to do any good. But by these means the people have well nigh lost that sense and abhorrence of the absurdity idolatry tyranny cruelty of the church of Rome, which ought to be kept alive and vigorous at all times, and especially when popery begins to gain any ground, or attempts to make any advances upon us. But what is even more pernicious than this, is the want of residence and resident curates, whereby a wide door is left open for methodism popery and all kinds of evil to enter without check or controul. Every man's parish is, as I may say, his proper field; and if the husbandman neglects to sow good seed, the enemy will certainly come to sow his tares. As our Saviour declares, (John X. 12, &c.) "the hireling seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; the hireling fleeth because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep: but the good shepherd knoweth his sheep, and is known of them; and a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers," methodists or papists. The better to guard them against popery we should take all proper occasions of instilling into their minds a just dread and horror of that religion, and whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, we shall yet have delivered our own souls. Even the younger

younger clergy cannot be at a loss for sufficient materials. Mr. Locke says, that if a man would reason well, he should read Chillingworth; and Chillingworth, Tillotson and Stillingfleet will of themselves make any one a competent master of the controversy. If you would examin more into the particulars, there is a collection of the principal tracts and discourses written against popery by the most eminent divines in the reigns of Charles and James the Second. So noble a stand did the clergy make at that important and dangerous crisis: and for this collection we are obliged to the same great and worthy Prelate, to whom we are so much indebted for the knowlege of our ecclesiastical laws and constitution. No clergyman should be without it, especially as it may, though consisting of three large volumes in folio, be purchased at a moderate price. But you should apply to all other parts of good learning as well as to this; (1 Tim. IV. 13, &c.) "give attendence to reading, to
" exhortation, to doctrine; meditate upon these
" things, give yourselves wholly to them, that
" your profiting may appear to all." But above all you should lead clerical lives, lives becoming clergymen. You should "abstain" not only from the reality, but likewise (1 Thess. V. 22.) "from all appearance of evil;" for people are much influenced even by appearances. You should not only show in your whole deportment and conversation a due sense of
of

of religion yourselves, but likewise exert your utmost endeavors to impress it upon others. Men are so easily perverted from their religion, because they have no foundation of religion at all. You should recollect what you promised at your ordination; and to men of truth and honor there needeth not any other exhortation than barely to remind them of their promise. You then engaged, that you would "be ready
" with all faithful diligence to banish and
" drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines
" contrary to God's word; and to use both
" public and private monitions and exhortations, as well to the sick as to the whole,
" within your cures, as need shall require,
" and occasion shall be given:" That you would "be diligent in prayers, and in reading of the holy scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same,
" laying aside the study of the world and the flesh:" That you would "be diligent to
" frame and fashion your own selves and your families according to the doctrine of Christ;
" and to make both yourselves and them, as much as in you lieth, wholesome examples
" and patterns to the flock of Christ." These things you promised with the greatest solemnity: and may God almighty give you grace and power to perform the same, (2 Thess. II. 17.)
" make you perfect in every good word and work," (1 Pet. V. 10.) "stablish, strengthen, settle you," (Heb. XIII. 21.) "working
" ing

“ ing in you that which is well pleasing in his
“ fight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be
“ glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

C H A R G E III.

On the Licentiousness of the Times.

1770.

YOU cannot but grieve and lament with me, my Reverend Brethren, that we are fallen into very troublesome and turbulent times, sufficient to make the most careless to consider, and the most resolute of us all to tremble at the probable consequences. In former times the contest used to be, Under what kind of government we should live, and Who should be our governors; but now we are almost reduced to this question, Whether we shall have any government at all. The danger threatens equally the Church and the State. There is no subordination any where, neither that weight and authority which ought to be in the magistrates, nor that reverence and submission which ought to be in the people. Both the laws and the lawgivers have lost their power and dignity. A leveling principle pre-

vails. Liberty is the cry, but the meaning is licentiousness. All things are tending to anarchy and confusion, as if there was no king, and no God who ruled in the kingdoms of men.

Never was there a period, when the people had less reason to be jealous and apprehensive of the power or ambition of the clergy, when the Bishops and governors of the Church were more gentle and moderate in the exercise of that jurisdiction with which the constitution hath vested them. We are so far from exerting any improper authority, or incroaching upon any of the rights and privileges of the laity or clergy, that it must be said we are rather too remiss and negligent in maintaining proper disciplin, and exacting canonical obedience. We and the rest of the clergy are so far from infringing or desiring in any respect to infringe the act of toleration, that we readily allow to all sorts of dissenters the free exercise of their religion, nay we connive at several abuses of the law, rather than give the least handle to unreasonable jealousies and suspicions. But yet complaints are publicly made, as if the English clergy were too favorably inclined to popery, and were for reviving all the exorbitant claims and usurpations of the Romish hierarchy. Grave books are written professedly with intention to subvert all ecclesiastical government, yea to dissolve and destroy the very being of the Church as a society, by

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breaking

breaking down all its fences and inclosures and throwing the whole as it were into a common field, by rejecting all creeds and confessions, all articles and canons, and requiring only such loose and general subscriptions, as a papist may make as well as a protestant, any heretic as well as a true believer. They complain of church power for no other reason but because they have it not. When they get it into their own hands, none are more imperious than they, or more absolute "lords over God's " heritage." In the fullest and freest enjoyment of their own religion, they suddenly refuse to the Church of England what the Church of England generously allows to them, every essential order in their church, and will not so much as bear the name of a bishop in America.

Never was there a period, when a better king sat on the throne of these kingdoms, an illustrious example to all his subjects of all virtues, of sobriety and temperance uncommon in the early part of life, of the truest filial duty, of the dearest conjugal affection, of the greatest paternal tenderness, of the most decent and unaffected piety and devotion, the best of men as well as the best of princes, a judge as well as a patron of the fine arts. No vice public or private can be laid to his charge. If he hath any failing, it is only being too good for the corruption and iniquity of the times. He hath constantly made the law of

the land the rule of his actions, and hath testified his regard for law and liberty by doing what none of our kings ever did before him, increasing the salaries and making the office of the judges independent and for life. Happy in himself and in his family he hath no interest, he can have no interest but to make all his people happy; and it is altogether their own fault if they are not so. But yet how hath this most amiable prince been pestered, his privacies broke in upon, and his repose disturbed by the unmannerliness and unruliness of some of his subjects! How hath the vilest and the grossest abuse been poured upon all that he holds dear as well as upon his own sacred person! What it would be treason only to whisper in the ear, hath been publicly printed and dispersed among the people. He hath been branded as a Nero, who more than Titus deserves to be called *the delight of human kind*. Surely there can be no tyranny, there can be no stretch of power and prerogative, there must on the contrary be too much lenity, too much forbearance in government, when such crimes are suffered to pass without the most exemplary punishment.

Never was there a period, when these kingdoms were in a more flourishing condition, or wealthier or happier, if we were but sensible of our happiness. We are at peace with our neighbours, and no prospect of an immediate rupture. Wealth and the signs of wealth, coaches

coaches plate jewels, never so much abounded. Riches flow in upon us with every tide. Our trade and manufactures are daily increasing and improving. Agriculture is better understood. All arts and sciences are advancing to greater perfection. It is hardly possible for those who have not seen them to frame an adequate idea of the great improvements made within these few years in the metropolis. The same spirit is spreading throughout the nation. Cities and towns are vying with each other in paving and lighting their streets, in the number as well as in the convenience and elegance of their houses, in their public as well as in their private edifices, in building bridges, cutting canals, and making rivers navigable. The country displays a very different scene from what it did not many years ago. Instead of here and there an old castle and ruined fortification beautiful villas and magnificent palaces are thick set in almost every county. The roads every where are so much mended, that we travel now with delight where before we went with danger; waste and barren lands are inclosed and enriched by cultivation; grounds are laid out with taste, and plantations made for pleasure as well as for profit; every farm almost is ornamented, and the whole country hath the appearance of a garden. Look into Scotland, look into Ireland, and you will see the same improvements or greater, as there was greater room for them. At the same time

profit hath kept pace with improvement; and in all parts the rents are greatly advanced, in some they are doubled. Every man may sit at ease under his own vine and under his own fig-tree, enjoying the good things of life with which he is surrounded, without any molestation or disturbance, unless perhaps from the riotous and unruly multitude; for there is our greatest danger, not from the power of the crown but the licentiousness of the people. But yet contrary to these plain matters of fact you may hear tragical outcries and lamentations, as if the nation were sinking under a load of grievances, as if our trade and commerce were totally ruined, as if liberty and property were in the utmost danger, as if the Parliament were depriving the people of their rights when for the good of the people they have even given up their own privileges, as if King Lords and Commons were in conspiracy to establish despotism and tyranny, with a thousand other grievances, which exist no where but in the gloomy imagination of some disappointed malecontents, and thence are propagated with aggravation to taint and inflame the minds of the people.

But what then? perhaps you will say, Are there no grievances? Yes I could draw up a long and a black catalogue of grievances. But the spring and source, the sum and substance of all is the want of religion. Religion hath lost its hold upon the minds of the people.

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High and low, rich and poor, all retain too little sense of religion; and hence proceed all our evils. With religion we might be the happiest nation upon earth, having every thing else to make us so. (Psal. CXLIV. 15.)

“Happy are the people that are in such a case, yea blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God.” Without religion (LXIX. 23.) “the things that should have been for our wealth, will be to us an occasion of falling,” our blessings become our curse, and salvation itself cannot save us.

If religion and virtue had their due influence and effect, there would not be that total degeneracy and profligacy of manners among all sorts of people; that idleness and dissipation, that luxury and extravagance, that inordinate love of pleasure, that immoderate spirit of gaming, those midnight routs and revels, those frequent intrigues adulteries and divorces in higher life; that averseness from all work and labor, that drunkenness and debauchery, that pride and beggary, that spirit of riot and disobedience, those horrid oaths and execrations, those frequent robberies burglaries and murders in lower life. We may truly make

the complaint of the prophets; (Isa. I. 5, 6.) “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores.” (Psal. XIV. 4, &c.) “They

“ are gone out of the way, they are all together become abominable, there is none that doeth good, no not one; Destruction and unhappiness is in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known, there is no fear of God before their eyes.”

If religion and christian charity had their due influence and effect, there would not be those violent feuds and animosities, which almost tear out the heart and vitals of our dear country. And all for what end and purpose? St. James will resolve us (James IV. 1.) “ From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts?” It is all a contention for place and power. They talk much of a change of measures, but they design only a change of men. Their professions are all for the public, their endeavors are all for themselves. Those who are out would be in, and those who are in would keep so: and the folly is that the people are drawn in to be the dupes and instruments of a quarrel, wherein they have no manner of concern one way or other, and will not be one jot the better whatever changes are made. We have tried all changes, and been dissatisfied in all. The Jews were wearied of God’s own theocracy; and if an angel were to descend from heaven to govern us, we should still be discontented; so long as we are an immoral and irreligious, we can never be an easy or happy people. (Isa. LVII,

21.) "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

If religion and moral truth had their due influence and effect, there would not be that scandal and defamation, that monstrous abuse of all names and characters though ever so high ever so sacred, those abominable lies and calumnies, not whispered in broken hints, but printed at length and circulated throughout the nation, for our people are too much like the Athenians, who (Acts XVII. 21.) "spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing;" and the grosser the lies and calumnies, the more greedily they are received. In short truth honor and virtue are rarely to be found any where. It is not this party alone, nor that party alone, that is to blame. All parties are much alike.

Iliacos intra muros peccatur et extra.

And it is a lamentable proof of the wickedness and depravity of the times, when some of the most profligate and abandoned characters in the kingdom, blasphemers of their God, and libellers of their king, are the greatest favorites and idols of the people.

It is hoped that none of you, my Reverend Brethren, will add fuel to the fire that is kindled in the nation. You are the ministers of the gospel of peace, and will never be the promoters of division and faction; but rather
bring

Bring water to quench the flame, and contribute your utmost endeavors in your several stations to quiet and compose the minds of the people.

You will convince them of the necessity of religion to their present as well as their future, to their public as well as their private happiness; convince them by your doctrine, and what is more, convince them by your example, which will give double force to your doctrine. It will ever be found true as Solomon hath said, (Prov. XIV. 34.) that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." No man can be a good minister, no man can be a good patriot, who is not also a man of religion and virtue. A man of vice and extravagance, who hath ruined his own private fortune, can never be a good steward or trustee for the public. Whatever professions he may make, whatever disguises he may wear, the whole man, good or bad, must go together. A villain in private life, his public virtues are all pretence and mockery.

You will more particularly set before them the numerous evils and dangerous consequences of division and faction; that they absorb all public spirit, call off mens attention from national points, and consume their whole time in personal opposition or defense; that they give our enemies the greatest advantage over us; (Matt. XII. 25.) that "every king-

dom

“dom divided against itself is brought to desolation;” (James III. 16.) that “where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work!” The dreadful effects of civil commotions, one would think, were sufficiently felt in the last century: and can any lover of his country wish to see the same tragedy acted again, or without the like reasons run into the same dangers? There were then more real causes of complaint; there were then (no disparagement to the present) more able and virtuous leaders of opposition; there was then some religion, which is not so much as pretended at present; there was then the parliament with the main body of the people against the court, and not as at present, only a part, and chiefly the lower part of the people against King Lords and Commons. But yet with those advantages at that time on the popular side what were the fruits and consequences? All the horrors and calamities of a civil war, bloodshed and devastation, the subversion of our excellent constitution in church and state, the ruin of the chief nobility clergy and gentry, the murder of one king, the banishment of another with all the royal family, the heaviest payments and sequestrations, a military government and variety of tyranny, till at length the nation, exhausted and wearied out with oppressions, were impatient to recover their ancient constitution, and were glad to sit down where they

they first set out, without any conditions obtained for their future security. It would be downright madness in men, with such an example before their eyes, farther to prosecute their civil dissensions. You will show them on the contrary, (Psal. CXXXIII. 1.) "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity;" and exhort them to brotherly kindness and charity, to make their (Philip. IV. 5.) "moderation known unto all men;" (Rom. XVI. 17.) "to mark them who cause divisions, and to avoid them:" (Rom. XII. 18.) "if it be possible, as much as lieth in them, to live peaceably with all men:" for (1 Cor. XIV. 33.) "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace;" (James III. 18.) "and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." It can be for no man's interest to blow the coals of sedition, unless men of the most restless ambition, or of broken desperate fortunes, who like common incendiaries set the house on fire, that they may run away with some of the spoil in the general confusion. A true patriot is for healing the bleeding wounds of his country, and for not tearing them more open.

You will farther admonish them to be sober and industrious in their different callings; (1 Theff. IV. 11.) to "study to be quiet, and to do their own business;" (Psal. CXXXI.

1.) "not to exercise themselves in great matters, or in things too high for them;" (Prov. XXIV. 21.) to "fear the Lord and the king, and not" to "meddle with them that are given to change." The public will not be the better for all their talking and intermeddling, but their own private affairs will be the worse. Idleness erects them into politicians; and politicians soon become spend-thrifts, and drunkards, and bankrupts, and even beggars, as we have seen in several instances. And what better foundation have the chief articles of their political creed than the public papers, three parts whereof consist of calumnies and lies, and if there is any truth in the remaining part, that truth is commonly mistaken or misrepresented. Never was in any other age such scandalous abuse of the liberty of the press, nor would be suffered in any other country. Surely the writers and publishers do not enough consider the hainousness of the crime: (John VIII. 44.) "The devil is the father of lies;" and among those who "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. XXI. 8. XXII. 15.) are particularly mentioned "all liars," and "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

Moreover you will lay great stress and emphasis upon the duties of subjection and obedience to the higher powers, that they (Rom. XIII. 5.) "must needs be subject not only for wrath, but

“ but also for conscience sake.” Considering the difficulties of government, they should render it as easy as they can to their governors; and instead of raising obstructions and aggravating complaints, should rather make favorable allowances for mistakes and errors in so large a sphere, when even within their own little circle they cannot manage their own households entirely to satisfaction, the servants of the public being no more than others exempted from faults and failings. How much soever it may be the practice, it is no light offense to “ despise dominion and speak evil of dignities.” (Exod. XXII.) “ Thou shalt not,” saith Moses, “ revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.” And who are they chiefly who bring such “ railing accusations,” but carnal sensual wicked men, as both St. Peter and St. Jude describe them? St. Peter saith, (2 Pet. II. 9, 10.) “ The Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished, but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government; presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.” St. Jude in like manner, (ver. 8.) “ Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.” “ Put them” therefore (Tit. III. 1, 2.) “ in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready
“ to

"to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men." Address them in the words of St. Peter, (1 Pet. II. 13, &c.) "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men, love the brotherhood; fear God, honor the King." Address them in the words of St. Paul, (Gal. V. 13.) "Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." Liberty and licentiousness are totally different things, and the one is the certain destruction of the other; the most ready way to lose our liberties is to abuse them. Such pretended champions for law and liberty, when they get power, are the first to trample upon all laws, and prove the worst of tyrants. For (2 Pet. II. 19.) "while they promise" others "liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption." A bad man can never be free. (2 Cor. III. 17.) "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there" and there only "is liberty." Finally,

Finally, my brethren, (1 Tim. II. 1, 2, 3.)
 " I exhort that supplications, prayers, inter-
 " cessions, and giving of thanks be made for
 " all men, for kings, and for all that are in
 " authority, that we may lead a quiet and
 " peaceable life in all godliness and honesty ;
 " for this is good and acceptable in the sight
 " of God our Saviour." Amidst all the tu-
 mults and disorders of the world, it is still
 matter of joy and comfort, that there is a God
 above all, who is able to controll the unruly
 wills and actions of sinful men. (Psal. XCVII.
 1.) " The Lord is king, the earth may be
 " glad thereof, yea the multitude of the isles
 " may be glad thereof." If there was not
 such an overruling providence, and men were
 left to themselves, there would be nothing but
 wild misrule, destruction and desperation ; but
 (Psal. LXV. 7.) " God stilleth the raging of
 " the sea, and the noise of his waves, and the
 " madness of the people." Let us therefore
 earnestly beseech the King of kings and Lord
 " of lords," that he (LXXII. 1, &c.) would
 " give the King his judgments and righteous-
 " ness," to " judge the people according
 " unto right, and punish the wrong doer,"
 direct his heart and strengthen his hands, and
 (Psal. CXXXII. 19.) " for his enemies cloath
 " them with shame, but upon himself" make
 " his crown flourish ;" that he would indue the
 magistrates with spirit and courage, to " bear"
 no longer " the sword in vain," but faithfully
 and

and vigorously execute the laws, and maintain good order and good government; that he would open the eyes of the deluded multitude, and recover them to a just sense of their duty and of their interest, to distinguish rightly, who are their true friends and really wish to make them happy, and who are their real enemies and use them only as the tools and stepping-stones of their ambition; that he would "deliver us from all sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion, from hardness of heart and contempt of his word and commandment;" that there may be (Psal. CXLIV. 14.) "no decay, no leading into captivity, and no complaining in our streets;" that there may be none other contention among us, than who shall be the best citizens and subjects, the best men and christians, (Matt. XXII. 21.) "rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." No man who truly prayeth for the welfare of his country, can ever be willing to disturb its peace. "O pray" then (Psal. CXXXII. 6, &c.) "for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions sake" for the sake of all civil and social duties, "I will with thee prosperity: Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God," because of the true religion professed among us, "I will seek to do
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“thee good.” And may God give us all the grace and wisdom (Luke XIX, 42.) to see and “know, at least in this our day, the things which belong unto our peace,” before “they are hid from our eyes.”

C H A R G E IV.

On the late Attempts against the Church.

1773.

My Reverend Brethren,

YOU know very well whose saying it is, that “in the last days perilous times shall come;” and I may say, “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” Time has been, when a grievous outcry was raised of the Church being in danger without much occasion for it; men were afraid, where little or no fear was: but at present we seem compassed with dangers on every side, which it behoves every true son of the Church, and us of the Clergy particularly, to watch and guard against. That spirit of licentiousness under the mask of liberty, which was the subject of my complaint and exhortation at our last meeting, hath spread its taint and infection from

the state even to the Church, is equally an enemy to all government ecclesiastical as well as civil, and if not restrained in due time, will terminate in the ruin and destruction of both.

The first attack was made by some of our own body, disclaiming all creeds articles and confessions; as if any Church, or indeed any society could subsist in the world without certain rules and orders, to which all the members should be obliged to conform. Even while they are men, they will be subject to no human jurisdiction. The infallible word of God is the test and standard of their opinions, and to that alone they will subscribe. But every fanatic and enthusiast, every sectary and papist, every schismatic and heretic would say the same: and so the door would be opened for any or all of these to enter, all uniformity would be destroyed, and the Church of England become a Babel of religions as well as of languages. The proposition is so palpably absurd, so contrary to all sense and reason, that no wonder their petition was rejected as soon almost as it was offered. The wonder was that any could be found to recommend it; but there is nothing so monstrous and unreasonable, that some or others will not support and maintain merely for the sake of opposition. It should seem that they themselves were in some measure ashamed of their attempt by not renewing their application this last session, if they had not declared their purpose of persevering.

vering. But it is to be hoped that God's grace and time for recollection may bring them to a better understanding, and convince them of the iniquity the folly the madness of their undertaking. If they had read and studied *Hooker*, as every Divine ought to do, their scruples would never have been raised, or would have been laid as soon as raised. They might also have learned better things from *Dr. Rogers's Discourse of the visible and invisible Church*, which in a manner put an end to the Bangorian controversy. Or if instead of reading only *the Confessional*, they would read together with it *Dr. Ridley's answers*, wherein he was assisted by our late most worthy and most able Metropolitan, they would see the sophistry of the arguments detected, the falsity of the facts and quotations exposed, and the whole book as effectually refuted as ever book was, besides the manifest inconsistency of a man's pleading for entire liberty of conscience with all the malevolence and intolerance of a father of the Inquisition. Not to mention now *the Alliance between Church and State*, or the late vindications of the Church of England by those learned Divines who have engaged in the present controversy, particularly the Archdeacon of Winchester, and the Dean of Gloucester [to whom I am glad of this opportunity of returning my public thanks.] If none of these will satisfy them, if (1 John II. 19.) "they will not be of us," it is to be wished that
 " they

“ they would go out from us,” and show their sincerity at least by not desiring or retaining (what they think) “ the wages of unrighteousness.”

Much more may be said in favor of the Dissenters plea, who from some hints thrown out in this debate took occasion also to apply for relief. But really what relief was wanting, or where was the least shadow of grievance? The laws lay dormant, and no man was aiming or wishing to rouse them into execution against them. They complied with the terms of the toleration act or not, they subscribed to the Articles and took out a licence or not, just as they pleased, none offering to molest or call them to any account. The great lenity and mildness of government, the known moderation and candor of the clergy, the free spirit and liberal temper of the times absolutely forbid all apprehensions of severity: and were the attempt to be made, I am persuaded it would not succeed. What occasion then to raise an alarm, when there was not the least danger, or the least appearance of danger? Churchmen and dissenters were drawing nearer and nearer to each other; but now I fear they may have fixed (I hope it was not their intention to fix) a lasting barrier between us. Toleration and liberty of conscience are indeed glorious things; and I wish to God, that every man of every country and religion had the full and free enjoyment of them. But they who plead at

large for toleration do not sufficiently distinguish between private opinion and public preaching. A man's private opinions ought not to be, and indeed cannot be subject to human controul; they must be left to God and his own conscience: but his public preaching, as a matter relating to the community, should be subject to some limitations and restrictions. It is contrary to all the rules and maxims of sound policy for any state or government to grant a licence to any men or number of men to preach any doctrines that they think proper, without knowing at all the nature of their doctrines whether they are hurtful to the state or not. Mr. Locke and the strongest advocates for toleration are yet for allowing it only so far as it may consist with the safety of the state. The Dissenters themselves in their printed Case admit, "that the safety of the state is the grand line which should limit the extent of toleration." Some test therefore is requisite, some declaration or summary of their principles for the security and satisfaction of government, that it may be known whether they are consistent with the peace and happiness of civil society. This test, this summary of doctrines, their forefathers and our forefathers agreed, should be subscription to the 39 Articles, except the 34th, 35th, 36th, and part of the 20th Article, which relate to church government: and in this measure both parties have acquiesced above fourscore years,

and

and the greatest part of the dissenters are for acquiescing still. Last year indeed it was pretended, that the new bill would be acceptable to the whole body of dissenters; but this year it appeared, that great numbers of them petitioned, and were heard by counsel against it. It is not a bill therefore for the relief of protestant dissenting ministers at large, but only of some particular persons, who differing from their forefathers and differing from many of their brethren profess, that they can no longer subscribe to the Articles, yet without expressing what Articles they dislike; their opinions are very different from what they were, yet without specifying what their present opinions are; instead of the 39 Articles they can only subscribe "a declaration of their being Christians and Protestants, and that, as such, they receive the revelation of the will of God, contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as the rule of their faith and practice." But there are several sects of Christians and Protestants, who will make all the same declaration, and yet maintain principles pernicious to all society and destructive of all morality, as Antinomians, Fifth-monarchymen, and others whom I could name: And where then is the certainty and assurance to government, that some or others of them also may not advance the like pernicious doctrines, and in like manner derive, or pretend to derive them from scripture? If they will declare

nothing to the contrary, they may be perhaps some Moravians, some Socinians, or some I know not what. Their unwillingness to give a summary of their doctrines infers at least a suspicion, that they cannot abide the test, or otherwise they would not be ashamed of them. This declaration therefore is by no means satisfactory or sufficient; and yet more they refuse as being too much; this cannot be accepted as being too little; and whatever reasons the Commons may have had for passing their bill, the Lords have rejected it twice by a majority of more than two to one, exclusive of the Bishops.

Another attack has been made, and threatened to be renewed, which would be more fatal to the Church and the Clergy. The old law maxim, that no time avails against the King or the Church, *nullum tempus occurrit regi vel ecclesiæ*, having been lately repealed with regard to the crown, it is pretended to be just and reasonable, that it should also be set aside with regard to the church. But the two cases are extremely different. The manors and demesns of the crown are but a very small part of its revenues; it is more amply provided for by the bounty and liberality of the public: but the tithes and estates of the church are in a manner the whole subsistence of the clergy; supplies from other quarters are very inconsiderable. The crown too has more powerful means of asserting its claims
and

and recovering its dues than the church; and the limitation of time, which may be proper for the one, would be destructive to the other. If such a bill pass into a law, the state and condition of the church would be deplorable indeed. For partly through the encroachments and usurpations of the laity, the influence of patrons and combinations of parishioners, their pleading excuses and exemptions, their interested designs in keeping the clergy in ignorance, their little regard for religion and those who minister in religion; and partly through the neglect and indolence of the clergy, their general want of skill and dexterity in secular affairs, their coming strangers to their charges and discovering their rights (if at all) with great difficulty, their willingness to oblige their patrons and to live upon good terms with their neighbours, their backwardness to enter into law-suits, some for want of inclination, others for want of ability: by these means, I say, partly through the encroachment of the laity, and partly through the neglects (not to say worse) of the clergy, the patrimony of the church would by degrees be reduced more and more, so that what in these dear times is hardly a sufficient, would in the course of a few years become a totally insufficient maintenance for the clergy; and there would be no church and no religion in the nation. Such is the state to which some men seem desirous to bring us: and a great aggravation of the grievance is, that

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that "those who eat of our bread have lifted
 "up their heel against us;" those who hold
 estates under the church; and therefore should
 be friendly to it, are often its worst enemies;
 and not only contrary to all reason and justice
 make themselves judges in their own cause,
 but even would repeal the old laws which are
 against them by enacting new ones in their
 own favor, which is the consummation of ar-
 bitrary power. In the course of the last winter
 were published *Considerations on the Act of
 Parliament, commonly called the Nullum Tempus
 Act, with some reasons why such a statute of li-
 mitation ought not to be extended to ecclesiastical
 persons, printed for Lockyer Davis in Holborn:*
 Which are written with so much good sense,
 such command of temper, and such force of
 argument, that I would recommend them to
 every Clergyman, and indeed to every Gentle-
 man; and if after the serious perusal of them
 any man could be for promoting such a bill, I
 should have a very bad opinion either of his
 honor or of his understanding, if not of both.
 This attack was open enough; another has
 been made more sily and covertly. For in
 a bill, the declared purpose of which was to
*inforce several acts of parliament for the reco-
 very and payment of tithes, and to enlarge the
 powers thereby given,* there was a clause insert-
 ed in favor of the Quakers, which instead of
*inforcing the several acts would plainly weaken
 them, and instead of enlarging the powers*
 would

would diminish them. As the laws stand at present, the Clergy are allowed, for the greater and readier dispatch, in suits for recovering tithes from Quakers the value whereof doth not exceed ten pounds, to apply to two justices of the peace, and to have the thing determined in a summary way; and from them there is no farther appeal than to the Quarter-sessions whose determination is to be final. But the design of this clause was to compel the Clergy to make use of the same summary method in all cases whatever, and for all sums whatever, and thereby oblige them to submit their greatest interests to an arbitrary and perhaps a partial determination, without the possibility of obtaining any redress elsewhere. This was indeed stealing a march upon us; for from the title of the bill such a clause could never have been expected, and it had made some progress in the House before the alarm was given: but when the mischief was pointed out in precluding so large a body of men from the great courts of judicature which are open to all the rest of the nation, it appeared so contrary to all the principles of law and equity, so contrary to the nature and genius of this free government, that the promoters of it might well be ashamed of it, and desire to withdraw it.

The last attempt whereof I shall take particular notice at this time, proceeded from some of our own body, as did also the first that

that I mentioned. These as well as the former contended for a revision of the Liturgy and Articles, and for making several alterations and amendments in accommodation to the present modes of thinking: but these did not like the former, "despise dominion and speak evil of dignities;" they proposed to refer the whole to the superior wisdom and discretion of their ecclesiastical governors. Every one, I believe, will readily agree, that some things may be changed for the better both in our Liturgy and Articles; and no one hath wished more earnestly for a revision of them, than I did myself, till I had more fully considered matters. For there are abundant instances of things, which appear right and reasonable and proper in theory, and yet when they come to be reduced to practice, are attended with insuperable difficulties. If they who propose alterations were desired themselves to make them, scarce any three of them would agree together in the same particulars. In changes of such public consequence, it is not sufficient for a man to sit down in his closet, and make corrections and alterations as he may think proper; but the whole process must be conducted in due form and order agreeably to the rules of the constitution in church and state. A commission must be first issued from the Crown to certain Bishops and Divines for this purpose. But who should apply for this commission? The Bishops, you will

will say. But should not the Bishops be first persuaded of the practicability of the scheme and of the probability of its doing good, that the temper of the times will bear it, and that it will be carried on with candor and moderation on all sides? If application should be made for such a commission, how can we be certain that the King's ministers will approve it, and advise His Majesty to grant it? Ministers are generally for keeping things quiet, at least during their own time; and very wisely, for no man knoweth, when matters of this sort are once put into motion where they may stop, or what disturbances innovations in the church may produce in the state. But if a commission should be granted to such and such Bishops and Divines, yet certainly it is a work that is not to be dispatched hastily, it would require much time and much deliberation, and after all possibly the commissioners might not agree in the form and substance of their alterations. But if the alterations should be settled and agreed upon, then they are to be laid before the Convocation; and it is not difficult to foresee what endless disputes and altercations may arise there. Then they are to be laid before both Houses of Parliament before they can pass into a law; and who would wish to see the two Houses of Parliament become schools of polemical divinity? But if all these difficulties were surmounted, and the alterations were established

established by law, yet some would reject as others would receive them, some would think that too much and others that too little was done; there would immediately be the old Church of England and the new Church of England; schisms would be multiplied and increased, and Christ's coat which was "without seam" would be rent all to pieces. Experience sufficiently justifies these apprehensions; for when commissions of the like kind have been granted, as after the accession of James the First, after the Restoration, and after the Revolution, they never produced any good, they terminated rather in more strife and contention: and Bishop Burnet himself, who was a zealous friend to toleration and comprehension, and was a very active member in the last commission, speaking of its ending without effect, asserts (1) that it was "a very happy direction of the providence of God. For by all the judgments we could afterwards make, if we had carried a majority in the convocation for alterations, they would have done us more hurt than good." It is better therefore to rest contented with a tolerable good constitution, than to be continually tampering with it, and trying medicines whereof we know neither the end nor the use nor the effect. No human institution whatever can be without defects, that is the best which hath the fewest.

(1) Hist. Vol. 2. p. 35, 36.

least and fewest. God be thanked, there is nothing essential and fundamental to be altered in our Liturgy or Articles; and for lesser imperfections we may very well bear with them, and with one another: and if any are still for correcting and amending the Liturgy, let them first correct themselves, and amend it, as becomes them, by a better manner of reading it with more gravity and devotion.

I thought it proper, my Reverend Brethren, to apprise you of these signs and characteristics of the times, that from hence you may the better know how to direct and regulate your behaviour, that you may in some measure distinguish who are your friends, and who are your enemies, that you may give your enemies no advantage over you, but that "ye may be blameless and harmless, and in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation may shine as lights in the world." There are yet other mischiefs in embryo, relating to tithes and to lands in mortmain, which I trust will prove abortive and never have strength to come to the birth: but I have already trespassed too long upon your patience and my own, and therefore will only conclude with the short and seasonable advice of the apostle (Eph. V. 15, 16.) "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

CHARGE

C H A R G E S.

A Diffusive from Schism.

1776 and 1777.

My Reverend Brethren,

CONSIDERING my age and frequent indispositions, this in all probability may be the last time of our meeting together in this manner. When our blessed Saviour was about to take leave of his disciples, the legacy he bequeathed unto them was *Peace*. (John XIV. 27.) "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you." In humble imitation of this divine example my last request, my last bequest unto you shall also be *Peace*. Peace is the great principle of the gospel; I wish it was as much the ruling principle of our lives and actions. But such is the perverseness of the times, and to our shame be it spoken, that under the best of governments upon earth, as there are unreasonable factions in the State, so there are groundless schisms in the Church. There are men who cannot rest contented with the old stated service of the Church, for no better reason than because it is old. They are for substituting new modes of worship, new articles

articles of faith, new forms of prayer; and by strange novel heterodox doctrines draw away disciples after them.

But surely they have not sufficiently considered the great duty and excellence of uniformity, and the great sin and scandal of schism. Men, as individuals in the state of nature, are free to think and choose and act for themselves; but as members of society they have given up part of their natural freedom, and are obliged to conform to the laws and orders of society. Yet there is no society, no government, ecclesiastical or civil, that hath ever attained unto perfection. There are some laws and constitutions both in the one and the other, which perhaps you may see reason to wish amended: but you are not therefore at liberty to disobey the laws, and to disturb the peace of the state or church in which you were born, and under which you live. Public establishments are not to be broken through out of private humor and caprice, because this man or that man may conceive that this thing or that thing may possibly be made better. For by the same right that one man dissents, another may dissent; and so there would be no end of schisms and divisions, but an utter end of all establishments, of all law and lawful authority. We are not yet come to that pass, though it be what some earnestly recommend, that every man should be his own lawgiver, his own governor; nor can we ever come to that pass, as long as any

society subsists, we must first be reduced to a state below Hottentots and Savages.

How different from these men were the sentiments of the good Psalmist; (Psal. CXXII. 1, &c.) "I was glad when they said unto me, "Let us go into the house of the Lord. Pray "for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy "walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. "For my brethren and companions sakes I "will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God, I "will seek thy good." And upon the sight of this union how doth he break forth into rapture, (CXXXIII. 1.) "Behold, how good "and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell "together in unity!" Communion is more especially the duty of all Christians, and there are higher obligations to it than Acts of Uniformity. It is not only enjoined by the law of the land, but is farther enforced and sanctified by the law of the Lord. One main object of our Saviour's prayer for his disciples was unity, (John XVII. 21.) "That they all may be one, "as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, "that they also may be one in us; that the "world may believe that thou hast sent me:" and if the unity of his disciples was a proof of his divine mission, their discord and dissensions must have a contrary effect. You cannot but remember that warm and affectionate exhortation of St. Paul to the Romans, (XVI. 17.)

“ Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them
“ which cause divisions and offenses contrary
“ to the doctrine which ye have learned, and
“ avoid them :” and that again to the Corin-
thians, (1 Cor. I. 10.) “ Now I beseech you,
“ brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus
“ Christ, that ye all speak the same thing,
“ and that there be no *ἑτερομασίαι* schisms or di-
“ visions among you ; but that ye be perfectly
“ joined together in the same mind and in the
“ same judgment :” and that also to the Ephe-
sians, (IV. 1, &c.) “ I therefore the prisoner
“ of the Lord beseech you, that ye walk wor-
“ thy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,
“ with all lowliness and meekness, with long-
“ suffering, forbearing one another in love ;
“ endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit
“ in the bond of peace. There is one body,
“ and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one
“ hope of your calling ; one Lord, one faith,
“ one baptism ; one God and Father of all,
“ who is above all, and through all, and in
“ you all.”

Uniformity of worship being then the law
of Christ as well as the law of the land, which
we are all bound to obey, nothing can justify
or excuse a separation, unless the terms of com-
munion are sinful ; and in such a case we must
obey God rather than men. It was upon this
principle that we vindicated our reformation
from the Church of Rome, because they not
only taught doctrines expressly contrary to the

word of God, but were also guilty of idolatry and other corrupt practices: and there was no living in communion with them without joining in these same things, and offending palpably against the light and conviction of conscience. They therefore who imposed the yoke, and not they who broke from it, were in reality the schismatics. But what objections of this kind can fairly be made to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England? It is in vain to look for absolute perfection in any work or ordinance of man. If we can approach any way near it, it is sufficient, without visionary schemes and projects of amendments. When things are once well settled and established, and have the sanction and approbation of ages, alterations are seldom made for the better, commonly for the worse, as is most evidently to be seen in the Candid Disquisitions and other attempts of the like nature to correct and reform our Liturgy. Look round the Christian world, and you will find it to be a most certain truth, that of all the various forms of religious worship, there are many more excellences, and fewer imperfections in our own than in any other whatever: And why then not rest satisfied with so reasonable a service? why not “hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is?”

Whether

Whether the numerous sects of those who are called *Dissenters* have discovered any thing in the worship and service of the Church established by law so criminal and offensive as to justify their separation from it, this is not a time to inquire. To their own Master they stand or fall. But there are some men, who profess themselves members of the Church of England, and pretend to hold her doctrines and articles in greater reverence and purity than others: and yet contrary to all order and decency, in open violation of the laws of the Church as well as the State, divine as well as human, set up separate congregations; erect tabernacles; preach in the fields and corners of the streets; call off people from their necessary work and labor; unable to distinguish themselves by any fair or honorable means, have recourse to unwarrantable expedients; would never be known, or heard of but for their strange singularities and irregular practices; many of them ordained and licensed only by themselves, invade the priests office; revile the Clergy of the established Church; rob them as much as they can of the affections of their parishioners, and even of their parochial dues; make shameful merchandise of the word of God, flatter and cajole the richer sort, collect small sums from the poorer, "by good words and fair speeches," as St. Paul expresseth it, (Rom. XVI. 18.) "deceive the hearts of the simple," beguiling them at once of their time, of their

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money, and of their understanding; cry up themselves and their followers as the only saints upon earth, and paragons of all holiness and godliness of living; boast of a divine mission and inspiration, of extraordinary gifts and graces of the holy Spirit, without any proof or credentials but their own confident assertions; and by noise and novelty, by cant and hypocrisy attract the admiration and applause of gaping ignorant multitudes, the preachers nonsense suiting the peoples nonsense like two instruments in unison. If the good effects, which are said to follow from hence, were all as real as they are pretended; yet we are expressly forbidden (Rom. III. 8.) to "do evil that good may come;" Of such men the apostle asserts, that "their damnation is just." But what are these good effects? Some perhaps have by these means been brought to a mistaken sense of religion who had none at all before: but the more general, the more obvious and striking effects are the neglect of their proper business and calling, morality and common honesty swallowed up and lost in faith, the form of godliness without the power, simulation and dissimulation, canting and lying, confused and bewildered thoughts, disturbed and dejected countenances, formality and preciseness, pride and censoriousness, fanaticism and enthusiasm, melancholy and madness. How they can reconcile this conduct of theirs to reason or scripture, to the laws of men or the laws of God,

God, surpasses my comprehension. We shall hear any thing from them sooner than reasons, reasoning not being their talent; and so we must leave the matter to God and their own consciences. But for shame, let them no longer pretend to be of the Church of England. (1 Cor. XI. 16.) "We have no such customs, neither the churches of God." For (XIV. 33.) "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."

Others there are who have a better plea for their separation, if their principles were true. These are they who deny the divinity of our blessed Saviour, admit him indeed to be a teacher sent with an extraordinary commission from God, but will not allow him to be more than man, or to have had any existence prior to his being born of the Virgin Mary, and consequently profess to reverence and obey him as their prophet, to apply to him as their mediator, but not to worship and adore him as their God. Now the doctrine and practice of the Church of England being contrary to theirs, they can no longer join in communion with her, but renounce her liturgy and articles, resign their livings, and publish apologies for so doing, though this be the least exceptionable part of their conduct, and that which standeth least in need of any apology or vindication. For without doubt resigning is better than equivocating and lying both to God and men;

and it is to be wished, that all others who entertain the same opinions, would follow the same example, rather than receive the wages of iniquity, confessing one thing with their mouth, and believing another in their heart. Resignation would be some proof of their sincerity and disinterestedness, if they sat down contented with their loss, or if we could be certain that pride or vanity or love of filthy lucre did not lie at the bottom; the pride of heading a separate congregation, the vanity of being singular, the love of filthy lucre by contributions and collections from their auditors. Resignation may possibly proceed from a good intention, but there can be no excuse for continued prevarication.

If their principles I say were true, if their premises were right, their conclusion also would be right; and we should really be what they are pleased to call us, *idolaters*. But they have no better reason for denying the divinity of our Saviour and the doctrine of the Trinity, than because they cannot comprehend them; and if they are to reject every thing in religion which they cannot comprehend, there will be scarce any article of faith remaining. Neither do we pretend to comprehend these things any more than they, but we have the most sufficient and satisfactory reason for believing them, the authority of God, because they are expressly asserted or plainly implied in the word of God, and therefore cannot but be true.

true. As St. Paul saith (Rom. III. 4:) "Let God be true, and every man a liar." The authority of God is not to be set aside or weakened by their flimsy metaphysical reasonings. Their writings and apologies strike out no new lights, furnish no new matter, not even one new argument to the purpose; they are only a dull repetition of stale objections which have been refuted over and over again. But it is not fitting that such pestilential heresies should be suffered at any time to walk about without notice or reply. As fast as these Hydra's revive and raise their head, they should be knocked down again, which in the present case hath been done most effectually, and to general approbation, by a most ingenious Layman and Member of the Irish Parliament, by the worthy President of Corpus Christi College in Oxford, and by a learned Clergyman of my own diocese, Mr. Bingham, a name memorable for the knowlege of Christian Antiquities.

We must admit indeed, that the Church of England, though she generally offers up her prayers to God through the only mediator between God and men, yet sometimes addresses prayers and praises to our Lord Jesus Christ, and also to the Holy Ghost, as in the Litany, and in the Te Deum, and in some other parts of our service: and we cannot but think ourselves sufficiently justified in complying with the precepts and examples of scripture, and in
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conforming to the worship of the Christian Church of all ages and nations. We must likewise admit, that (Mark XII. 32.) "there is one God, and there is none other but he," and that (Matt. IV. 10.) "we must worship the Lord God, and him only we must serve." On the other hand it is also true, if scripture be true, that the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and not only the same name, but all the same divine attributes and perfections are ascribed to each of them. From these premises laid together it necessarily follows, that they are not three Gods but one God, an unity in trinity, and a trinity in unity; which identity and diversity are not properly objects of our reason but only of our faith; and after what manner this sameness and difference subsist in the Godhead we have not faculties to comprehend, but that they do really subsist there, we have infallible authority to believe; for they are not of our invention to solve a difficulty, but are plain and direct consequences from the word of God, which must be consistent with itself as well as with truth. One would think it impossible for men, who cannot fully comprehend their own nature and constitution, ever to arrive at such presumption as to pretend to define what is, and what is not the constitution of the Godhead, contrary to the testimony of God himself. Every reasonable man would say with that great master of reason,

son, Mr. Chillingworth, (Chap. 6. Sect. 56.)

“ Propose me any thing out of this book,

“ (the Bible) and require whether I believe

“ it or no, and seem it never so incompre-

“ hensible to human reason, I will subscribe

“ it with hand and heart, as knowing no de-

“ monstration can be stronger than this, God

“ hath said so, therefore it is true.”

We are baptized “ in the name of the Fa-
“ ther and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost :”
and what is this but devoting ourselves to their
worship and service?—We are blessed in their
name; “ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
“ and the love of God, and the communion
“ of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen :”
and have we not reason then to pray to them,
and implore their benediction?—In all our
Creeds we profess to “ believe in the Father
“ and in the Son and in the Holy Ghost :”
and since we are created, and redeemed, and
sanctified by them, why should we not readily
join in the doxology, “ Glory be to the Fa-
“ ther and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost ?”
—It is God’s declared intention, (John V. 23.)
“ that all men should honor the Son, even as
“ they honor the Father.”—At his first in-
troduction into the world it was said, (Heb.
I. 6.) “ Let all the angels of God worship
“ him :” and shall man refuse, who is so
much more obliged to him, and more depen-
dent upon him?—He was no sooner ascended
into heaven than the apostles (Luke XXIV.
52.) “ worshipped him ;” and at this time it
was

was certainly more than civil homage and worship.—Soon after, when an apostle was to be chosen in the room of Judas, (Acts I. 24.) “they prayed and said, Thou Lord which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen;” which prayer was in all probability addressed to Christ, because he is stiled “Lord” which was his usual appellation, and it is his prerogative as well as God’s to “know the hearts of all men,” to “know (John II. 25.) what was in man,” and to be (Heb. IV. 12.) “a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart;” and because his apostles were all of his peculiar appointment; he was therefore the proper person to be invoked upon this occasion to direct the choice; and he himself afterwards called St. Paul to be an apostle in a miraculous manner from heaven.—As in the article of death he commended his soul to God, (Luke XXIII. 46.) “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit;” so St. Stephen surrenders up his soul to Christ with the like prayer, (Acts VII. 59.) “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”—The worship of Christ was esteemed so necessary and essential a part of the Christian religion, that the first Christians were distinguished by the title of those (1 Cor. I. 2.) “who call upon the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.”—Paul upon his conversion was exhorted by his brother Ananias (Acts XXII. 16.) “to be baptized and wash away his sins, calling on the name

“name of the Lord,” meaning without doubt
“the Lord even Jesus who appeared to him in
“the way.”—St. Peter (Acts II. 21.) and St.
Paul (Rom. X. 13.) both recite the prophecy
of Joel, and both apply it to Christ, “Who-
“soever shall call upon the name of the Lord
“shall be saved.”—St. Paul speaking of his
thorn in the flesh or bodily infirmity says,
(2 Cor. XII. 8.) “For this thing I besought
“the Lord thrice, that it might depart from
“me:” where “the Lord” evidently appears
from the context to be the Lord Christ, for his
“strength” or power (*δυναμεις*) is afterwards
called (*δυναμεις* again) “the power of Christ.”
—His name as well as God the Father’s is em-
ployed in the most solemn adjurations, as by
St. Paul (Rom. IX. 1.) “I speak the truth
“in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bear-
“ing me witness in the Holy Ghost.”—
“Grace and mercy and peace” are implored
from him as well as from God the Father in
numerous passages of scripture; and St. Paul
in particular begins and concludes most of his
epistles with the same kind of prayer or bene-
diction.—“Dominion and power and glory
“and honor and blessing” are attributed to him
as well as to God the Father in several places;
and particularly by St. Peter (2 Pet. III. 18.)
“Grow in grace and in the knowlege of our
“Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be
“glory both now and for ever. Amen:” and
by St. John (Rev. I. 5, 6.) “Unto him that
“loved

" loved us, and washed us from our sins in his
 " own blood—be glory and dominion for ever
 " and ever: Amen;" and again (V. 12, 13.)
 " Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to re-
 " ceive power, and riches, and wisdom, and
 " strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing:
 " And every creature which is in heaven, and
 " on the earth, and under the earth, and such
 " as are in the sea, heard I, saying, Blessing,
 " and honor, and glory, and power be unto
 " Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto
 " the Lamb for ever and ever."

After so many proofs, and many more which
 might easily be collected, with what face can
 these men presume to call Jesus our *idol*? or
 how have the confidence to tell us that the pri-
 mitive Christians were generally Unitarians till
 the Council of Nice, and that for the three
 first centuries they addressed all religious wor-
 ship only to God the Father? Truth enforces
 me to say, that never were falser and more
 confident assertions, not only contrary to Scrip-
 ture as we have seen, but also to the truth of
 all ecclesiastical history, as it might amply be
 proved, and indeed hath been proved again and
 again, by abundance of citations from the fa-
 thers and ancient doxologies. Even Heathen
 authors might have taught them better. For
 in the beginning of the second century, Pliny
 the younger, in a letter of his to the Emperor
 Trajan (X. 97.) giving an account of the
 Christians of that age, says that they were wont
 on

on a stated day to assemble before it was light, and alternately to sing *a hymn to Christ as God*: and in the same century Lucian in his *Proteus* or *Death of the stranger* reproaches the Christians for worshipping a crucified man; and in his *Philopatri* ridicules them for swearing by the Trinity, *one of three and three of one*, as he expresses it. The Arians never carried matters so far as to deny the divinity of our Saviour, or to refuse the worship due to him and also to the Holy Ghost. Dr. Clarke in his *Scripture-Doctrin of the Trinity* hath two sections, (Part 1. Chap. 2. Sect. 4. and Chap. 3. Sect. 5.) one containing the passages, wherein is set forth the honor and worship which ought to be paid to the Son; and the other comprising the passages, wherein is declared what honor or worship is due to the Holy Ghost. But then he distinguisheth between the supreme worship due to the person of the Father singly; and a subordinate kind of worship due to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. This is the same kind of plea that the Romanists urge in defense of their worshipping of saints and angels: but an argument which we will not allow in them, we cannot reasonably make use of ourselves; and I was sorry to see so great and able a man as Dr. Clarke really was, adopt such an idle distinction as he would not suffer in others. For there is not the least foundation for it, nor the least intimation of any supreme or subordinate worship in scripture. "Worship
" God,"

“God,” says the angel. (Rev. XXII. 9.) This is the only worship enjoined in scripture; all other is forbidden.

Christ in his godhead is equal to the Father, he is inferior only in his manhood. As man only he is not to be worshipped by us, he is to be worshipped as God. But if he be not God, nor consequently to be worshipped by us, what becomes of the truth of the Christian religion, or what can be said in vindication of Christ and his Apostles for advancing so many falsties, and unavoidably leading us into such pernicious errors? What apology or excuse can be made for such gross fraud and prevarication as well as for such audacious effrontery and presumption, as their ascribing to him, and his arrogating to himself, the stile and title of godhead, when he was no more than a creature? The Jews more than once charged Jesus with blasphemy, because (John V. 18.) “he called “God *πατέρα ἑαυτοῦ* his own Father, making “himself equal with God;” and because (X. 33.) “he being a man made himself God;” and indeed if he had been man only, the charge would have been unanswerable: But he was so far from admitting their argument, or retracting in the least what he had said, that in all his answers he rather confirmed and established “his being equal with God, and his being “God.” According to St. Paul (Philipp. II. 6, &c.) Christ’s merits consisted in this, that “being in the form God he thought it not “robbery

“ robbery to be equal with God ;” that is, he did not assume to be equal with God, “ but made himself of no reputation ;” *ταυτον* *εκενωσεν*, emptied himself, divested himself of his former glory, “ and took upon him the “ form of a servant, and was made in the “ likeness of men ;” and for this reason was “ highly exalted, and a name given above “ every name, that at the name of Jesus every “ knee should bow :” But according to these men the reverse of all this was the truth, and he was guilty of this robbery in arrogating an equality with God. If he was nothing more than man, and had no being before he was born of the Virgin Mary, how could he say (John VIII. 58.) “ Before Abraham was, I “ am ;” *I am*, the name by which God made himself known unto the children of Israel : or how could he mention (XVII. 5.) his having been “ in glory with the Father before the “ world was ?” If he was nothing more than man, how could he speak of himself (III. 13.) as “ coming down from heaven, and being in “ heaven” even while he was upon earth : or how could he declare (V. 23.) that “ all men “ should honor the Son even as they honor “ the Father ?” If he was nothing more than man, how could he assume divine attributes to himself, (Rev. I. 17, 18.) “ I am the first “ and the last, I am alive for evermore ;” (II. 23.) “ I am he which searcheth the reins and “ hearts, and I will give to every one of you

“ according to your works ?” Nothing could justify such language but its being the voice of a God and not of a man. In any mere man it would be insufferable; and such a man so presumptuously affecting Godhead we could never with any reason believe to be a messenger of God and a teacher of righteousness, but must necessarily look upon him with abhorrence as a gross impostor, or foul blasphemer, or downright madman at best. It is impossible therefore for any consistent Socinian to be a true Christian.

If ever there were any, these are the men, who not *privily*, as the apostle says, but *publicly* (2 Pet. II. 1.) “ bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them,” the atonement made by Christ as well as his divinity. But this is not their only fault. They have new-modeled the Liturgy in accommodation to their own tenets, and would willingly change the whole form of our government; many of them being no less enemies to our civil than to our ecclesiastical constitution, Socinians in the one, Republicans in the other, and promoters of anarchy and confusion in both. On a double account therefore we should watch and guard against them, “ lest like Satan (2 Cor. II. 11.) they should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of their devices.” It is to be hoped that we have better learned our duty as Christians and as Englishmen, and have a true love and

and reverence for our excellent constitution both in Church and State. Let us then with regard to the Church observe St. Paul's injunction to Timothy, (1 Tim. VI. 20.) "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called." And with regard to the State let us continually bear in mind Solomon's wise advice to his son, (Prov. XXIV. 21.) "My son, fear thou the Lord and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change."

"Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, (2 Theff. II. 16, 17.) and God even our Father, who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope though grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

END OF VOL. III.